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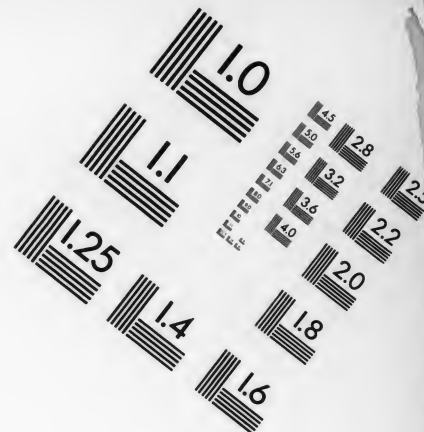
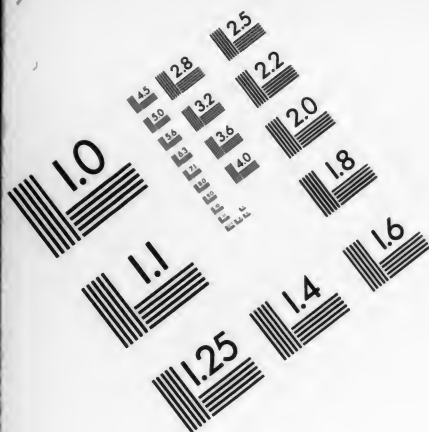
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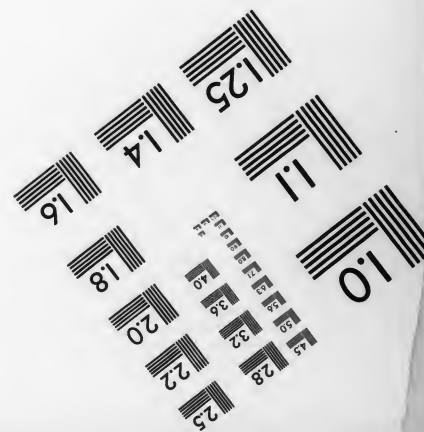
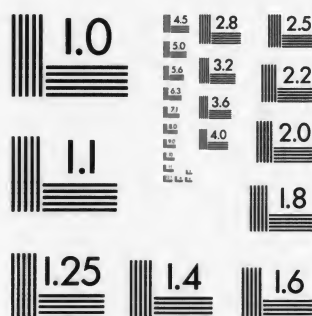
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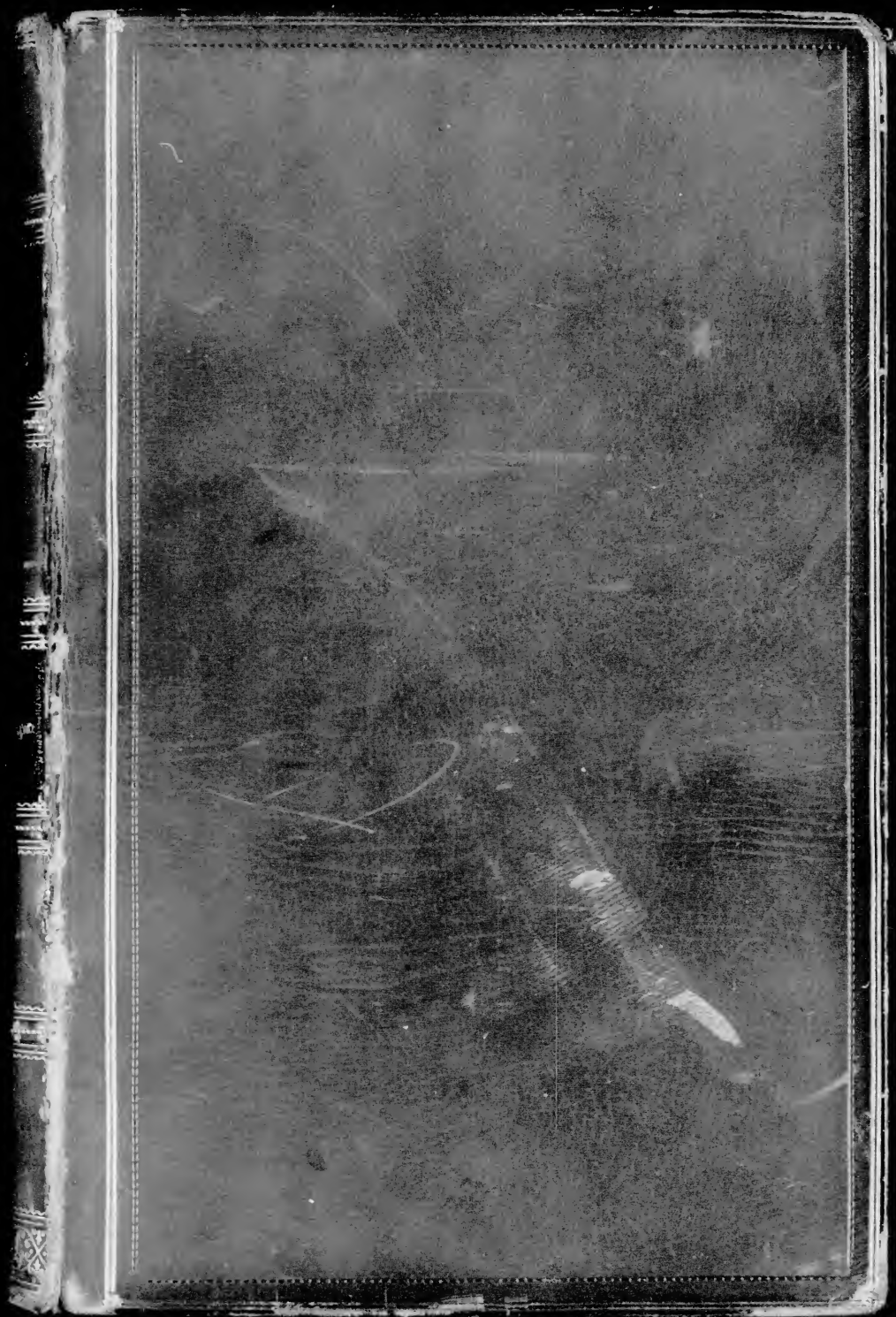
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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

VOL I



HISTORY
OF
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BY
JOHN RICHARD GREEN, M.A.,
HONORARY FELLOW OF JESUS' COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOLUME I.

Early England.	449-1071.
Foreign Kings.	1071-1214.
The Charter.	1204-1291.
The Parliament.	1307-1461.

WITH EIGHT MAPS.

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I Dedicate this Book

TO TWO DEAR FRIENDS,

MY MASTERS IN THE STUDY OF ENGLISH HISTORY,

EDWARD AUGUSTUS FREEMAN,

AND

WILLIAM STUBBS.

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BOOK I.

EARLY ENGLAND.

449—1071.

// VOL I

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AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK I

(449—1071.)

For the conquest of Britain by the English our authorities are scant and imperfect. The only extant British account is the "Epistola" of Gildas, a work written probably about A.D. 560. The style of Gildas is diffuse and inflated, but his book is of great value in the light it throws on the state of the island at that time, and as giving at its close what is probably the native story of the conquest of Kent. This is the only part of the struggle of which we have any record from the side of the conquered. The English conquerors, on the other hand, have left jottings of their conquest of Kent, Sussex, and Wessex in the curious annals which form the opening of the compilation now known as the "English" or "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," annals which are undoubtedly historic, though with a slight mythical intermixture. For the history of the English conquest of mid-Britain or the Eastern Coast we possess no written materials from either side; and a fragment of the Annals of Northumbria embodied in the later compilation ("Historia Britonum") which bears the name of Nennius alone throws light on the conquest of the North.

From these inadequate materials however Dr. Guest has succeeded by a wonderful combination of historical and archaeological knowledge in constructing a narrative of the conquest of Southern and South-Western Britain which must serve as the starting-point for all future enquirers. This narrative, so far as it goes, has served as the basis of the account given in my text; and I can only trust that it may soon be embodied in some more accessible form than that of a series of papers in the Transactions of the Archaeological Institute. In a like way, though Kemble's "Saxons in England" and Sir F. Palgrave's "History of the English Commonwealth" (if read with caution) contain much that is worth notice, our knowledge of the primitive constitution of the English people and the changes introduced into it since their settlement in Britain must be mainly drawn from the "Constitutional History" of Professor Stubbs. In my earlier book I had not the advantage of aid from this invaluable work, which was then unpublished;

in the present I do little more than follow it in all constitutional questions as far as it has at present gone.

Bæda's "*Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*," a work of which I have spoken in my text, is the primary authority for the history of the Northumbrian overlordship which followed the Conquest. It is by copious insertions from Bæda that the meagre regnal and episcopal annals of the West Saxons have been brought to the shape in which they at present appear in the part of the English Chronicle which concerns this period. The life of Wilfrid by Eddi, with those of Cuthbert by an anonymous contemporary and by Bæda himself, throw great light on the religious and intellectual condition of the North at the time of its supremacy. But with the fall of Northumbria we pass into a period of historical dearth. A few incidents of Mercian history are preserved among the meagre annals of Wessex in the English Chronicle: but for the most part we are thrown upon later writers, especially Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury, who, though authors of the twelfth century, had access to older materials which are now lost. A little may be gleaned from biographies such as that of Guthlac of Crowland; but the letters of Boniface and Alcuin, which have been edited by Jaffé in his series of "*Monumenta Germanica*," form the most valuable contemporary materials for this period.

From the rise of Wessex our history rests mainly on the English Chronicle. The earlier part of this work, as we have said, is a compilation, and consists of (1) Annals of the Conquest of South Britain, and (2) Short Notices of the Kings and Bishops of Wessex expanded by copious insertions from Bæda, and after the end of his work by brief additions from some northern sources. These materials may have been thrown together into their present form in Ælfred's time as a preface to the far fuller annals which begin with the reign of Æthelwulf, and which widen into a great contemporary history when they reach that of Ælfred himself. After Ælfred's day the Chronicle varies much in value. Through the reign of Eadward the Elder it is copious, and a Mercian Chronicle is imbedded in it: it then dies down into a series of scant and jejune entries, broken however with grand battle-songs, till the reign of Æthelred when its fulness returns.

Outside the Chronicle we encounter a great and valuable mass of historical material for the age of Ælfred and his successors. The life of Ælfred which bears the name of Asser, puzzling as it is in some ways, is probably really Asser's work, and certainly of contemporary authority. The Latin rendering of the English Chronicle which bears the name of Æthelweard adds a little to our acquaintance with this time. The Laws, which form the base of our constitutional knowledge of this period, fall, as has been well pointed out by Mr. Freeman, into two classes. Those of Eadward, Æthelstan, Eadmund, and Eadgar, are like the earlier laws of Æthelberht and Ine, "mainly of the nature of amendments of custom." Those of Ælfred, Æthelred, Cnut, with those which bear the name of Eadward the Confessor, "aspire to the character of Codes." They are printed in Mr. Thorpe's "*Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*," but the extracts given by Professor Stubbs in his "*Select Charters*" contain all that directly bears on our

constitutional growth. A vast mass of Charters and other documents belonging to this period has been collected by Kemble in his "*Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*," and some are added by Mr. Thorpe in his "*Diplomatarium Anglo-Saxonicum*." Dunstan's biographies have been collected and edited by Professor Stubbs in the series published by the Master of the Rolls.

In the period which follows the accession of Æthelred we are still aided by these collections of royal Laws and Charters, and the English Chronicle becomes of great importance. Its various copies indeed differ so much in tone and information from one another that they may to some extent be looked upon as distinct works, and "*Florence of Worcester*" is probably the translation of a valuable copy of the "*Chronicle*" which has disappeared. The translation however was made in the twelfth century, and it is coloured by the revival of national feeling which was characteristic of the time. Of Eadward the Confessor himself we have a contemporary biography (edited by Mr. Luard for the Master of the Rolls) which throws great light on the personal history of the King and on his relations to the house of Godwine.

The earlier Norman traditions are preserved by Dudo of St. Quentin, a verbose and confused writer, whose work was abridged and continued by William of Jumièges, a contemporary of the Conqueror. William's work in turn served as the basis of the "*Roman de Rou*" composed by Wace in the time of Henry the Second. The primary authority for the Conqueror himself is the "*Gesta Willemi*" of his chaplain and violent partizan, William of Poitiers. For the period of the invasion, in which the English authorities are meagre, we have besides these the contemporary "*Carmen de Bello Hastingensi*," by Guy, Bishop of Amiens, and the pictures in the Bayeux Tapestry. Orderic, a writer of the twelfth century, gossipy and confused but honest and well-informed, tells us much of the religious movement in Normandy, and is particularly valuable and detailed in his account of the period after the battle of Senlac. Among secondary authorities for the Norman Conquest, Simeon of Durham is useful for northern matters, and William of Malmesbury worthy of note for his remarkable combination of Norman and English feeling. Domesday Book is of course invaluable for the Norman settlement. The chief documents for the early history of Anjou have been collected in the "*Chroniques d'Anjou*" published by the Historical Society of France. Those which are authentic are little more than a few scant annals of religious houses; but light is thrown on them by the contemporary French chronicles. The "*Gesta Comitum*" is nothing but a compilation of the twelfth century, in which a mass of Angevin romance as to the early story of the Counts is dressed into historical shape by copious quotations from these French historians.

It is possible that fresh light may be thrown on our earlier history when historical criticism has done more than has yet been done for the materials given us by Ireland and Wales. For Welsh history the "*Brut-y-Tywysogion*" and the "*Annales Cambriæ*" are now accessible in the series published by the Master of the Rolls; the "*Chronicle of Caradoc of Llancarvan*" is translated by Powel; the Mabinogion, or Romantic Tales have been published by Lady Charlotte Guest;

and the Welsh Laws collected by the Record Commission. The importance of these, as embodying a customary code of very early date, will probably be better appreciated when we possess the whole of the Brehon Laws, the customary laws of Ireland, which are now being issued by the Irish Laws Commission, and to which attention has justly been drawn by Sir Henry Maine ("Early History of Institutions") as preserving Aryan usages of the remotest antiquity.

The enormous mass of materials which exists for the early history of Ireland, various as they are in critical value, may be seen in Mr. O'Curry's "Lectures on the Materials of Ancient Irish History;" and they may be conveniently studied by the general reader in the "Annals of the Four Masters," edited by Dr. O'Donovan. But this is a mere compilation (though generally a faithful one) made about the middle of the seventeenth century from earlier sources, two of which have been published in the Rolls series. One, the "Wars of the Gaedhil with the Gaill," is an account of the Danish wars which may have been written in the eleventh century; the other, the "Annals of Loch Cé," is a chronicle of Irish affairs from the end of the Danish wars to 1590. The "Chronicon Scotorum" (in the same series) extends to the year 1150, and though composed in the seventeenth century is valuable from the learning of its author, Duaid Mac-Firbis. The works of Colgan are to Irish church affairs what the "Annals of the Four Masters" are to Irish civil history. They contain a vast collection of translations and transcriptions of early saints' lives, from those of Patrick downwards. Adamnan's "Life of Columba" (admirably edited by Dr. Reeves) supplies some details to the story of the Northumbrian kingdom. Among more miscellaneous works we find the "Book of Rights," a summary of the dues and rights of the several over-kings and under-kings, of much earlier date probably than the Norman invasion; and Cormac's "Glossary," attributed to the tenth century and certainly an early work, from which much may be gleaned of legal and social details, and something of the pagan religion of Ireland.

CHAPTER I.

THE ENGLISH CONQUEST OF BRITAIN.

449—577.

FOR the fatherland of the English race we must look far away from England itself. In the fifth century after the birth of Christ the one country which we know to have borne the name of Angeln or England lay within the district which is now called Sleswick, a district in the heart of the peninsula that parts the Baltic from the northern seas. Its pleasant pastures, its black-timbered homesteads, its prim little townships looking down on inlets of purple water, were then but a wild waste of heather and sand, girt along the coast with a sunless woodland broken here and there by meadows that crept down to the marshes and the sea. The dwellers in this district however seem to have been merely an outlying fragment of what was called the Engle or English folk, the bulk of whom lay probably in what is now Lower Hanover and Oldenburg. On one side of them the Saxons of Westphalia held the land from the Weser to the Rhine; on the other the Eastphalian Saxons stretched away to the Elbe. North again of the fragment of the English folk in Sleswick lay another kindred tribe, the Jutes, whose name is still preserved in their district of Jutland. Engle, Saxon, and Jute all belonged to the same Low-German branch of the Teutonic family; and at the moment when history discovers them they were being drawn together by the ties of a common blood, common speech, common

CHAP. I. social and political institutions. There is little ground indeed for believing that the three tribes looked on themselves as one people, or that we can as yet apply to them, save by anticipation, the common name of Englishmen. But each of them was destined to share in the conquest of the land in which we live; and it is from the union of all of them when its conquest was complete that the English people has sprung.

The English Village. Of the temper and life of the folk in this older England we know little. But from the glimpses that we catch of it when conquest had brought them to the shores of Britain their political and social organization must have been that of the German race to which they belonged. In their villages lay ready formed the social and political life which is round us in the England of to-day. A belt of forest or waste parted each from its fellow villages, and within this boundary or mark the "township," as the village was then called from the "tun" or rough fence and trench that served as its simple fortification, formed a complete and independent body, though linked by ties which were strengthening every day to the townships about it and the tribe of which it formed a part. Its social centre was the homestead where the ætheling or eorl, a descendant of the first English settlers in the waste, still handed down the blood and traditions of his fathers. Around this homestead or æthel, each in its little croft, stood the lowlier dwellings of the earliest settler who had in various ways forfeited their claim to a share in the original homestead, or more probably from incomers into the village who had since settled round it and been admitted to a share in the land and freedom of the community. The eorl was distinguished from his fellow villagers by his wealth and his nobler blood; he was held by them in an hereditary reverence; and it was from him and his fellow æthelings that host-leaders, whether of the village or the tribe, were chosen in times of war. But this claim to precedence rested simply

on the free recognition of his fellow villagers. Within the township every freeman or ceorl was equal. It was the freeman who was the base of village society. He was the "free-necked man" whose long hair floated over a neck which had never bowed to a lord. He was the "weaponed man" who alone bore spear and sword, and who alone preserved that right of self-redress or private war which in such a state of society formed the main check upon lawless outrage.

Among the English, as among all the races of mankind, justice had originally sprung from each man's personal action. There had been a time when every freeman was his own avenger. But even in the earliest forms of English society of which we find traces this right of self-defence was being modified and restricted by a growing sense of public justice. The "blood-wite" or compensation in money for personal wrong was the first effort of the tribe as a whole to regulate private revenge. The freeman's life and the freeman's limb had each on this system its legal price. "Eye for eye," ran the rough code, and "life for life," or for each fair damages. We see a further step towards the modern recognition of a wrong as done not to the individual man but to the people at large in another custom of early date. The price of life or limb was paid, not by the wrong-doer to the man he wronged, but by the family or house of the wrong-doer to the family or house of the wronged. Order and law were thus made to rest in each little group of people upon the blood-bond which knit its families together; every outrage was held to have been done by all who were linked in blood to the doer of it, every crime to have been done against all who were linked in blood to the sufferer from it. From this sense of the value of the family bond as a means of restraining the wrong-doer by forces which the tribe as a whole did not as yet possess sprang the first rude forms of English justice. Each kinsman was his kinsman's keeper, bound to protect him from wrong, to hinder him from wrong-doing, and to

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The
Land.

suffer with him and pay for him if wrong were done. So fully was this principle recognized that even if any man was charged before his fellow-tribesmen with crime his kinsfolk still remained in fact his sole judges; for it was by their solemn oath of his innocence or his guilt that he had to stand or fall.

As the blood-bond gave its first form to English justice, so it gave their first forms to English society and English warfare. Kinsmen fought side by side in the hour of battle, and the feelings of honour and discipline which held the host together were drawn from the common duty of every man in each little group of warriors to his house. And as they fought side by side on the field, so they dwelled side by side on the soil. Harling abode by Harling, and Billing by Billing; and each "wick" or "ham" or "stead" or "tun" took its name from the kinsmen who dwelled together in it. In this way the home or "ham" of the Billings was Billingham, and the "tun" or township of the Harlings was Harlington. But in such settlements the tie of blood was widened into the larger tie of land. Land with the German race seems at a very early time to have become everywhere the accompaniment of full freedom. The freeman was strictly the free-holder, and the exercise of his full rights as a free member of the community to which he belonged became inseparable from the possession of his "holding" in it. But property had not as yet reached that stage of absolutely personal possession which the social philosophy of a later time falsely regarded as its earliest state. The woodland and pasture-land of an English village were still undivided, and every free villager had the right of turning into it his cattle or swine. The meadow-land lay in like manner open and undivided from hay-harvest to spring. It was only when grass began to grow afresh that the common meadow was fenced off into grass-fields, one for each household in the village; and when hay-harvest was over fence and division were at an end again.

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Læt and
Slave.

The plough-land alone was permanently allotted in equal shares both of corn-land and fallow-land to the families of the freemen, though even the plough-land was subject to fresh division as the number of claimants grew greater or less.

It was this sharing in the common land which marked off the freeman or ceorl from the unfree man or læt, the tiller of land which another owned. As the ceorl was the descendant of settlers who whether from their earlier arrival or from kinship with the original settlers of the village had been admitted to a share in its land and its corporate life, so the læt was a descendant of later comers to whom such a share was denied, or in some cases perhaps of earlier dwellers from whom the land had been wrested by force of arms. In the modern sense of freedom the læt was free enough. He had house and home of his own, his life and limb were as secure as the ceorl's—save as against his lord; it is probable from what we see in later laws that as time went on he was recognized among the three tribes as a member of the nation, summoned to the folk-moot, allowed equal right at law, and called like the full free man to the hosting. But he was unfree as regards lord and land. He had neither part nor lot in the common land of the village. The ground which he tilled he held of some free man of the tribe to whom he paid rent in labour or in kind. And this man was his lord. Whatever rights the unfree villager might gain in the general social life of his fellow villagers, he had no rights as against his lord. He could leave neither land nor lord at his will. He was bound to render due service to his lord in tillage or in fight. So long however as these services were done the land was his own. His lord could not take it from him; and he was bound to give him aid and protection in exchange for his services.

Far different from the position of the læt was that of the slave, though there is no ground for believing that the slave class was other than a small one. It was a class

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which sprang mainly from debt or crime. Famine drove men to "bend their heads in the evil days for meat;" the debtor, unable to discharge his debt, flung on the ground his freeman's sword and spear, took up the labourer's mattock, and placed his head as a slave within a master's hands. The criminal whose kinsfolk would not make up his fine became a crime-serf of the plaintiff or the king. Sometimes a father pressed by need sold children and wife into bondage. In any case the slave became part of the live stock of his master's estate, to be willed away at death with horse or ox, whose pedigree was kept as carefully as his own. His children were bondsmen like himself; even a freeman's children by a slave mother inherited the mother's taint. "Mine is the calf that is born of my cow," ran an English proverb. Slave cabins clustered round the homestead of every rich landowner; ploughman, shepherd, goatherd, swineherd, oxherd and cowherd, dairymaid, barnman, sower, hayward and woodward, were often slaves. It was not indeed slavery such as we have known in modern times, for stripes and bonds were rare: if the slave was slain it was by an angry blow, not by the lash. But his master could slay him if he would; it was but a chattel the less. The slave had no place in the justice court, no kinsmen to claim vengeance or guilt-fine for his wrong. If a stranger slew him his lord claimed the damages; if guilty of wrong-doing, "his skin paid for him" under his master's lash. If he fled he might be chased like a strayed beast, and when caught he might be flogged to death. If the wrong-doer were a woman-slave she might be burned.

The
Moot.

With the public life of the village however the slave had nothing, the læt in early days little, to do. In its Moot, the common meeting of its villagers for justice and government, a slave had no place or voice, while the læt was originally represented by the lord whose land he tilled. The life, the sovereignty of the settlement resided solely in the body of the freemen whose holdings lay round the

moot-hill or the sacred tree where the community met from time to time to deal out its own justice and to make its own laws. Here new settlers were admitted to the freedom of the township, and bye-laws framed and headman and tithing-man chosen for its governance. Here ploughland and meadow-land were shared in due lot among the villagers, and field and homestead passed from man to man by the delivery of a turf cut from its soil. Here strife of farmer with farmer was settled according to the "customs" of the township as its elder men stated them, and four men were chosen to follow headman or ealdorman to hundred-court or war. It is with a reverence such as is stirred by the sight of the head-waters of some mighty river that one looks back to these village-moots of Friesland or Sleswick. It was here that England learned to be a "mother of Parliaments." It was in these tiny knots of farmers that the men from whom Englishmen were to spring learned the worth of public opinion, of public discussion, the worth of the agreement, the "common sense," the general conviction to which discussion leads, as of the laws which derive their force from being expressions of that general conviction. A humourist of our own day has laughed at Parliaments as "talking shops," and the laugh has been echoed by some who have taken humour for argument. But talk is persuasion, and persuasion is force, the one force which can sway freemen to deeds such as those which have made England what she is. The "talk" of the village moot, the strife and judgement of men giving freely their own rede and setting it as freely aside for what they learn to be the wiser rede of other men, is the groundwork of English history.

Small therefore as it might be, the township or village was thus the primary and perfect type of English life, domestic, social, and political. All that England has been since lay there. But changes of which we know nothing had long before the time at which our history opens grouped these little commonwealths together in larger

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CHAP. I. communities, whether we name them Tribe, People, or Folk. The ties of race and kindred were no doubt drawn tighter by the needs of war. The organization of each Folk, as such, sprang in all likelihood mainly from war, from a common greed of conquest, a common need of defence. Its form at any rate was wholly military. The Folk-moot was in fact the war-host, the gathering of every freeman of the tribe in arms. The head of the Folk, a head who existed only so long as war went on, was the leader whom the host chose to command it. Its Witenagemote or meeting of wise men was the host's council of war, the gathering of those ealdormen who had brought the men of their villages to the field. The host was formed by levies from the various districts of the tribe; the larger of which probably owed their name of "hundreds" to the hundred warriors which each originally sent to it. In historic times however the regularity of such a military organization, if it ever existed, had passed away, and the quotas varied with the varying customs of each district. But men, whether many or few, were still due from each district to the host, and a cry of war at once called town-reeve and hundred-reeve with their followers to the field.

The military organization of the tribe thus gave from the first its form to the civil organization. But the peculiar shape which its civil organization assumed was determined by a principle familiar to the Germanic races and destined to exercise a vast influence on the future of mankind. This was the principle of representation. The four or ten villagers who followed the reeve of each township to the general muster of the hundred were held to represent the whole body of the township from whence they came. Their voice was its voice, their doing its doing, their pledge its pledge. The hundred-moot, a moot which was made by this gathering of the representatives of the townships that lay within its bounds, thus became at once a court of appeal from the moots of each separate village as

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well as of arbitration in dispute between township and township. The judgement of graver crimes and of life or death fell to its share; while it necessarily possessed the same right of law-making for the hundred that the village-moot possessed for each separate village. And as hundred-moot stood above town-moot, so above the hundred-moot stood the Folk-moot, the general muster of the people in arms, at once war-host and highest law-court and general Parliament of the tribe. But whether in Folk-moot or hundred-moot, the principle of representation was preserved. In both the constitutional forms, the forms of deliberation and decision, were the same. In each the priests proclaimed silence, the ealdormen of higher blood spoke, groups of freemen from each township stood round, shaking their spears in assent, clashing shields in applause, settling matters in the end by loud shouts of "Aye" or "Nay."

Of the social or the industrial life of our fathers in this older England we know less than of their political life. But there is no ground for believing them to have been very different in these respects from the other German peoples who were soon to overwhelm the Roman world. Though their border nowhere touched the border of the Empire they were far from being utterly strange to its civilization. Roman commerce indeed reached the shores of the Baltic, and we have abundant evidence that the arts and refinement of Rome were brought into contact with these earlier Englishmen. Brooches, sword-belts, and shield-bosses which have been found in Sleswick, and which can be dated not later than the close of the third century, are clearly either of Roman make or closely modelled on Roman metal-work. The vessels of twisted glass which we know to have been in use at the tables of English and Saxon chieftains came, we can hardly doubt, from Roman glass-works. Discoveries of Roman coins in Sleswick peat-mosses afford a yet more conclusive proof of direct intercourse with the Empire. But apart from these outer influences the men of the

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three tribes were far from being mere savages. They were fierce warriors, but they were also busy fishers and tillers of the soil, as proud of their skill in handling plough and mattock or steering the rude boat with which they hunted walrus and whale as of their skill in handling sword and spear. They were hard drinkers, no doubt, as they were hard toilers, and the "ale-feast" was the centre of their social life. But coarse as the revel might seem to modern eyes, the scene within the timbered hall which rose in the midst of their villages was often Homeric in its simplicity and dignity. Queen or Eorl's wife with a train of maidens bore ale-bowl or mead-bowl round the hall from the high settle of King or Ealdorman in the midst to the mead benches ranged around its walls, while the gleeman sang the hero-songs of his race. Dress and arms showed traces of a love of art and beauty, none the less real that it was rude and incomplete. Rings, amulets, ear-rings, neck pendants, proved in their workmanship the deftness of the goldsmith's art. Cloaks were often fastened with golden buckles of curious and exquisite form, set sometimes with rough jewels and inlaid with enamel. The bronze boar-crest on the warrior's helmet, the intricate adornment of the warrior's shield, tell like the honour in which the smith was held their tale of industrial art. It is only in the English pottery, hand-made, and marked with coarse zig-zag patterns, that we find traces of utter rudeness.

Religion. The religion of these men was the same as that of the rest of the German peoples. Christianity had by this time brought about the conversion of the Roman Empire, but it had not penetrated as yet among the forests of the north. The common God of the English people was Woden, the war-god, the guardian of ways and boundaries, to whom his worshippers attributed the invention of letters, and whom every tribe held to be the first ancestor of its kings. Our own names for the days of the week still recall to us the gods whom our fathers worshipped in their

German homeland. Wednesday is Woden's-day, as Thursday is the day of Thunder, the god of air and storm and rain. Friday is Frea's-day, the deity of peace and joy and fruitfulness, whose emblems, borne aloft by dancing maidens, brought increase to every field and stall they visited. Saturday commemorates an obscure god Sætere; Tuesday the dark god, Tiw, to meet whom was death. Eostre, the god of the dawn or of the spring, lends his name to the Christian festival of the Resurrection. Behind these floated the dim shapes of an older mythology; "Wyrð," the death-goddess, whose memory lingered long in the "Weird" of northern superstition; or the Shield-maidens, the "mighty women" who, an old rime tells us, "wrought on the battle-field their toil and hurled the thrilling javelins." Nearer to the popular fancy lay deities of wood and fell or hero-gods of legend and song; Nicor, the water-sprite who survives in our nixies and "Old Nick"; Weland, the forger of weighty shields and sharp-biting swords, who found a later home in the "Weyland's smithy" of Berkshire; Egil, the hero-archer, whose legend is one with that of Cloudesly or Tell. A nature-worship of this sort lent itself ill to the purposes of a priesthood; and though a priestly class existed it seems at no time to have had much weight among Englishmen. As each freeman was his own judge and his own lawmaker, so he was his own house-priest; and English worship lay commonly in the sacrifice which the house-father offered to the gods of his hearth.

It is not indeed in Woden-worship or in the worship of the older gods of flood and fell that we must look for the real religion of our fathers. The song of Beowulf, though the earliest of English poems, is as we have it now a poem of the eighth century, the work it may be of some English missionary of the days of Bæda and Boniface who gathered in the very homeland of his race the legends of its earlier prime. But the thin veil of Christianity which he has flung over it fades away as we follow the hero-legend of

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our fathers ; and the secret of their moral temper, of their conception of life breathes through every line. Life was built with them not on the hope of a hereafter, but on the proud self-consciousness of noble souls. "I have this folk ruled these fifty winters," sings a hero-king as he sits death-smitten beside the dragon's mound. "Lives there no folk-king of kings about me—not any one of them—dare in the war-strife welcome my onset! Time's change and chances I have abided, held my own fairly, sought not to snare men ; oath never sware I falsely against right. So for all this may I glad be at heart now, sick though I sit here, wounded with death-wound!" In men of such a temper, strong with the strength of manhood and full of the vigour and the love of life, the sense of its shortness and of the mystery of it all woke chords of a pathetic poetry. "Soon will it be," ran the warning rime, "that sickness or sword-blade shear thy strength from thee, or the fire ring thee, or the flood whelm thee, or the sword grip thee, or arrow hit thee, or age o'ertake thee, and thine eye's brightness sink down in darkness." Strong as he might be, man struggled in vain with the doom that encompassed him, that girded his life with a thousand perils and broke it at so short a span. "To us," cries Beowulf in his last fight, "to us it shall be as our Weird betides, that Weird that is every man's lord!" But the sadness with which these Englishmen fronted the mysteries of life and death had nothing in it of the unmanly despair which bids men eat and drink for to-morrow they die. Death leaves man man and master of his fate. The thought of good fame, of manhood, is stronger than the thought of doom. "Well shall a man do when in the strife he minds but of winning longsome renown, nor for his life cares!" "Death is better than life of shame!" cries Beowulf's sword-fellow. Beowulf himself takes up his strife with the fiend, "go the weird as it will." If life is short, the more cause to work bravely till it is over. "Each man of us shall abide the end of his life-work ; let

him that may work, work his doomed deeds ere death come!"

The energy of these peoples found vent in a restlessness which drove them to take part in the general attack of the German race on the Empire of Rome. For busy tillers and busy fishers as Englishmen were, they were at heart fighters ; and their world was a world of war. Tribe warred with tribe, and village with village ; even within the township itself feuds parted household from household, and passions of hatred and vengeance were handed on from father to son. Their mood was above all a mood of fighting men, venturesome, self-reliant, proud, with a dash of hardness and cruelty in it, but ennobled by the virtues which spring from war, by personal courage and loyalty to plighted word, by a high and stern sense of manhood and the worth of man. A grim joy in hard fighting was already a characteristic of the race. War was the Englishman's "shield-play" and "sword-game" ; the gleeman's verse took fresh fire as he sang of the rush of the host and the crash of its shield-line. Their arms and weapons, helmet and mailshirt, tall spear and javelin, sword and seax, the short broad dagger that hung at each warrior's girdle, gathered to them much of the legend and the art which gave colour and poetry to the life of Englishmen. Each sword had its name like a living thing. And next to their love of war came their love of the sea. Everywhere throughout Beowulf's song, as everywhere throughout the life that it pictures, we catch the salt whiff of the sea. The Englishman was as proud of his sea-craft as of his war-craft ; sword in teeth he plunged into the sea to meet walrus and sea-lion ; he told of his whale-chase amidst the icy waters of the north. Hardly less than his love for the sea was the love he bore to the ship that traversed it. In the fond playfulness of English verse the ship was "the wave-floater," "the foam-necked," "like a bird" as it skimmed the wave-crest, "like a swan" as its curved prow breasted the "swan-road" of the sea.

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Their passion for the sea marked out for them their part in the general movement of the German nations. While Goth and Lombard were slowly advancing over mountain and plain the boats of the Englishmen pushed faster over the sea. Bands of English rovers, outdriven by stress of fight, had long found a home there, and lived as they could by sack of vessel or coast. Chance has preserved for us in a Sleswick peat-bog one of the war-keels of these early pirates. The boat is flat-bottomed, seventy feet long and eight or nine feet wide, its sides of oak boards fastened with bark ropes and iron bolts. Fifty oars drove it over the waves with a freight of warriors whose arms, axes, swords, lances, and knives were found heaped together in its hold. Like the galleys of the Middle Ages such boats could only creep cautiously along from harbour to harbour in rough weather; but in smooth water their swiftness fitted them admirably for the piracy by which the men of these tribes were already making themselves dreaded. Its flat bottom enabled them to beach the vessel on any fitting coast; and a step on shore at once transformed the boatmen into a war-band. From the first the daring of the English race broke out in the secrecy and suddenness of the pirates' swoop, in the fierceness of their onset, in the careless glee with which they seized either sword or oar. "Foes are they," sang a Roman poet of the time, "fierce beyond other foes and cunning as they are fierce; the sea is their school of war and the storm their friend; they are sea-wolves that prey on the pillage of the world!"

Britain. Of the three English tribes the Saxons lay nearest to the Empire, and they were naturally the first to touch the Roman world; before the close of the third century indeed their boats appeared in such force in the English Channel as to call for a special fleet to resist them. The piracy of our fathers had thus brought them to the shores of a land which, dear as it is now to Englishmen, had not as yet been trodden by English feet. This land was Britain. When the Saxon boats touched its

coast the island was the westernmost province of the Roman Empire. In the fifty-fifth year before Christ a descent of Julius Cæsar revealed it to the Roman world; and a century after Cæsar's landing the Emperor Claudius undertook its conquest. The work was swiftly carried out. Before thirty years were over the bulk of the island had passed beneath the Roman sway and the Roman frontier had been carried to the Firths of Forth and of Clyde. The work of civilization followed fast on the work of the sword. To the last indeed the distance of the island from the seat of empire left her less Romanized than any other province of the west. The bulk of the population scattered over the country seem in spite of imperial edicts to have clung to their old law as to their old language, and to have retained some traditional allegiance to their native chiefs. But Roman civilization rested mainly on city life, and in Britain as elsewhere the city was thoroughly Roman. In towns such as Lincoln or York, governed by their own municipal officers, guarded by massive walls, and linked together by a network of magnificent roads which reached from one end of the island to the other, manners, language, political life, all were of Rome.

For three hundred years the Roman sword secured order and peace without Britain and within, and with peace and order came a wide and rapid prosperity. Commerce sprang up in ports amongst which London held the first rank; agriculture flourished till Britain became one of the corn-exporting countries of the world; the mineral resources of the province were explored in the tin mines of Cornwall, the lead mines of Somerset or Northumberland, and the iron mines of the Forest of Dean. But evils which sapped the strength of the whole Empire told at last on the province of Britain. Wealth and population alike declined under a crushing system of taxation, under restrictions which fettered industry, under a despotism which crushed out all local independence. And

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with decay within came danger from without. For centuries past the Roman frontier had held back the barbaric world beyond it, the Parthian of the Euphrates, the Numidian of the African desert, the German of the Danube or the Rhine. In Britain a wall drawn from Newcastle to Carlisle bridled the British tribes, the Picts as they were called, who had been sheltered from Roman conquest by the fastnesses of the Highlands. It was this mass of savage barbarism which broke upon the Empire as it sank into decay. In its western dominions the triumph of these assailants was complete. The Franks conquered and colonized Gaul. The West-Goths conquered and colonized Spain. The Vandals founded a kingdom in Africa. The Burgundians encamped in the border-land between Italy and the Rhone. The East-Goths ruled at last in Italy itself.

Conquests
of Jute
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It was to defend Italy against the Goths that Rome in the opening of the fifth century withdrew her legions from Britain, and from that moment the province was left to struggle unaided against the Picts. Nor were these its only enemies. While marauders from Ireland, whose inhabitants then bore the name of Scots, harried the west, the boats of Saxon pirates, as we have seen, were swarming off its eastern and southern coasts. For forty years Britain held bravely out against these assailants; but civil strife broke its powers of resistance, and its rulers fell back at last on the fatal policy by which the Empire invited its doom while striving to avert it, the policy of matching barbarian against barbarian. By the usual promises of land and pay a band of warriors was drawn for this purpose from Jutland in 449 with two ealdormen, Hengest and Horsa, at their head. If by English history we mean the history of Englishmen in the land which from that time they made their own, it is with this landing of Hengest's war-band that English history begins. They landed on the shores of the Isle of Thanet at a spot known since as Ebbsfleet. No spot can be so sacred to Englishmen as the spot which first

felt the tread of English feet. There is little to catch the eye in Ebbsfleet itself, a mere lift of ground with a few grey cottages dotted over it, cut off now-a-days from the sea by a reclaimed meadow and a sea-wall. But taken as a whole the scene has a wild beauty of its own. To the right the white curve of Ramsgate cliffs looks down on the crescent of Pegwell Bay; far away to the left across grey marsh-levels where smoke-wreaths mark the site of Richborough and Sandwich the coast-line trends dimly towards Deal. Everything in the character of the spot confirms the national tradition which fixed here the landing place of our fathers; for the physical changes of the country since the fifth century have told little on its main features. At the time of Hengest's landing a broad inlet of sea parted Thanet from the mainland of Britain; and through this inlet the pirate boats would naturally come sailing with a fair wind to what was then the gravel-spit of Ebbsfleet.

The work for which the mercenaries had been hired was quickly done; and the Picts are said to have been scattered to the winds in a battle fought on the eastern coast of Britain. But danger from the Pict was hardly over when danger came from the Jutes themselves. Their fellow-pirates must have flocked from the Channel to their settlement in Thanet; the inlet between Thanet and the mainland was crossed, and the Englishmen won their first victory over the Britons in forcing their passage of the Medway at the village of Aylesford. A second defeat at the passage of the Cray drove the British forces in terror upon London; but the ground was soon won back again, and it was not till 465 that a series of petty conflicts which had gone on along the shores of Thanet made way for a decisive struggle at Wippedfleet. Here however the overthrow was so terrible that from this moment all hope of saving Northern Kent seems to have been abandoned, and it was only on its southern shore that the Britons held their ground. Ten years later, in 475, the long contest was over, and with the fall of Lymne, whose broken walls look from the slope to

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which they cling over the great flat of Romney Marsh, the work of the first English conqueror was done.

The warriors of Hengest had been drawn from the Jutes, the smallest of the three tribes who were to blend in the English people. But the greed of plunder now told on the great tribe which stretched from the Elbe to the Rhine, and in 477 Saxon invaders were seen pushing slowly along the strip of land which lay westward of Kent between the weald and the sea. Nowhere has the physical aspect of the country more utterly changed. A vast sheet of scrub, woodland, and waste which then bore the name of the Andredsweald stretched for more than a hundred miles from the borders of Kent to the Hampshire Downs, extending northward almost to the Thames and leaving only a thin strip of coast which now bears the name of Sussex between its southern edge and the sea. This coast was guarded by a fortress which occupied the spot now called Pevensey, the future landing-place of the Norman Conqueror; and the fall of this fortress of Anderida in 491 established the kingdom of the South-Saxons. "Ælle and Cissa beset Anderida," so ran the pitiless record of the conquerors, "and slew all that were therein, nor was there afterwards one Briton left." But Hengest and Ælle's men had touched hardly more than the coast, and the true conquest of Southern Britain was reserved for a fresh band of Saxons, a tribe known as the Gewissas, who landed under Cerdic and Cynric on the shores of the Southampton Water, and pushed in 495 to the great downs or Gwent where Winchester offered so rich a prize. Nowhere was the strife fiercer than here; and it was not till 519 that a decisive victory at Charford ended the struggle for the "Gwent" and set the crown of the West-Saxons on the head of Cerdic. But the forest-belt around it checked any further advance; and only a year after Charford the Britons rallied under a new leader, Arthur, and threw back the invaders as they pressed westward through the Dorsetshire wood-

lands in a great overthrow at Badbury or Mount Badon. The defeat was followed by a long pause in the Saxon advance from the southern coast, but while the Gewissas rested a series of victories whose history is lost was giving to men of the same Saxon tribe the coast district north of the mouth of the Thames. It is probable however that the strength of Camulodunum, the predecessor of our modern Colchester, made the progress of these assailants a slow and doubtful one; and even when its reduction enabled the East-Saxons to occupy the territory to which they have given their name of Essex a line of woodland which has left its traces in Epping and Hainault Forests checked their further advance into the island.

Though seventy years had passed since the victory of Aylesford only the outskirts of Britain were won. The invaders were masters as yet but of Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, and Essex. From London to St. David's Head, from the Andredsweald to the Firth of Forth the country still remained unconquered: and there was little in the years which followed Arthur's triumph to herald that onset of the invaders which was soon to make Britain England. Till now its assailants had been drawn from two only of the three tribes whom we saw dwelling by the northern sea, from the Saxons and the Jutes. But the main work of conquest was to be done by the third, by the tribe which bore that name of Engle or Englishmen which was to absorb that of Saxon or Jute and to stamp itself on the people which sprang from the union of the conquerors as on the land that they won. The Engle had probably been settling for years along the coast of Northumbria and in the great district which was cut off from the rest of Britain by the Wash and the Fens, the later East-Anglia. But it was not till the moment we have reached that the line of defences which had hitherto held the invaders at bay was turned by their appearance in the Humber and the Trent. This great river-line led like a highway into the heart of Britain; and civil strife

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seems to have broken the strength of British resistance. But of the incidents of this final struggle we know nothing. One part of the English force marched from the Humber over the Yorkshire wolds to found what was called the kingdom of the Deirans. Under the Empire political power had centred in the district between the Humber and the Roman wall; York was the capital of Roman Britain; villas of rich landowners studded the valley of the Ouse; and the bulk of the garrison maintained in the island lay camped along its northern border. But no record tells us how Yorkshire was won, or how the Engle made themselves masters of the uplands about Lincoln. It is only by their later settlements that we follow their march into the heart of Britain. Seizing the valley of the Don and whatever breaks there were in the woodland that then filled the space between the Humber and the Trent, the Engle followed the curve of the latter river, and struck along the line of its tributary the Soar. Here round the Roman *Ratae*, the predecessor of our Leicester, settled a tribe known as the Middle-English, while a small body pushed further southwards, and under the name of "South-Engle" occupied the oolitic upland that forms our present Northamptonshire. But the mass of the invaders seem to have held to the line of the Trent and to have pushed westward to its head-waters. Repton, Lichfield, and Tamworth mark the country of these western Englishmen, whose older name was soon lost in that of Mercians, or Men of the March. Their settlement was in fact a new march or borderland between conqueror and conquered; for here the impenetrable fastness of the Peak, the mass of Cannock Chase, and the broken country of Staffordshire enabled the Briton to make a fresh and desperate stand.

Conquests
of West-
Saxons.

It was probably this conquest of Mid-Britain by the Engle that roused the West-Saxons to a new advance. For thirty years they had rested inactive within the limits of the Gwent, but in 552 their capture of the hill-fort of Old Sarum threw open the reaches of the Wiltshire downs and

a march of King Cuthwulf on the Thames made them masters in 571 of the districts which now form Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Pushing along the upper valley of Avon to a new battle at Barbury Hill they swooped at last from their uplands on the rich prey that lay along the Severn. Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath, cities which had leagued under their British kings to resist this onset, became in 577 the spoil of an English victory at Deorham, and the line of the great western river lay open to the arms of the conquerors. Once the West-Saxons penetrated to the borders of Chester, and Uriconium, a town beside the Wrekin which has been recently brought again to light, went up in flames. The raid ended in a crushing defeat which broke the West-Saxon strength, but a British poet in verses still left to us sings piteously the death-song of Uriconium, "the white town in the valley," the town of white stone gleaming among the green woodlands. The torch of the foe had left it a heap of blackened ruins where the singer wandered through halls he had known in happier days, the halls of its chief Kyndylan, "without fire, without light, without song," their stillness broken only by the eagle's scream, the eagle who "has swallowed fresh drink, heart's blood of Kyndylan the fair."

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CHAPTER II.

THE ENGLISH KINGDOMS.

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WITH the victory of Deorham the conquest of the bulk of Britain was complete. Eastward of a line which may be roughly drawn along the moorlands of Northumberland and Yorkshire through Derbyshire and the Forest of Arden to the Lower Severn, and thence by Mendip to the sea, the island had passed into English hands. Britain had in the main become England. And within this new England a Teutonic society was settled on the wreck of Rome. So far as the conquest had yet gone it had been complete. Not a Briton remained as subject or slave on English ground. Sullenly, inch by inch, the beaten men drew back from the land which their conquerors had won; and eastward of the border line which the English sword had drawn all was now purely English.

It is this which distinguishes the conquest of Britain from that of the other provinces of Rome. The conquest of Gaul by the Franks or that of Italy by the Lombards proved little more than a forcible settlement of the one or the other among tributary subjects who were destined in a long course of ages to absorb their conquerors. French is the tongue, not of the Frank, but of the Gaul whom he overcame; and the fair hair of the Lombard is all but unknown in Lombardy. But the English conquest of Britain up to the point which we have reached was a sheer dispossession of the people whom the English conquered. It was not

that Englishmen, fierce and cruel as at times they seem to have been, were more fierce or more cruel than other Germans who attacked the Empire; nor have we any ground for saying that they, unlike the Burgundian or the Frank, were utterly strange to the Roman civilization. Saxon mercenaries are found as well as Frank mercenaries in the pay of Rome; and the presence of Saxon vessels in the Channel for a century before the descent on Britain must have familiarized its invaders with what civilization was to be found in the Imperial provinces of the West. What really made the difference between the fate of Britain and that of the rest of the Roman world was the stubborn courage of the British themselves. In all the world-wide struggle between Rome and the German peoples no land was so stubbornly fought for or so hardly won. In Gaul no native resistance met Frank or Visigoth save from the brave peasants of Brittany and Auvergne. No popular revolt broke out against the rule of Odoacer or Theodoric in Italy. But in Britain the invader was met by a courage almost equal to his own. Instead of quartering themselves quietly, like their fellows abroad, on subjects who were glad to buy peace by obedience and tribute, the English had to make every inch of Britain their own by hard fighting.

This stubborn resistance was backed too by natural obstacles of the gravest kind. Everywhere in the Roman world the work of the conquerors was aided by the civilization of Rome. Vandal or Frank marched along Roman highways over ground cleared by the Roman axe and crossed river or ravine on the Roman bridge. It was so doubtless with the English conquerors of Britain. But though Britain had long been Roman, her distance from the seat of Empire left her less Romanized than any other province of the West. Socially the Roman civilization had made little impression on any but the townsfolk, and the material civilization of the island was yet more backward than its social. Its natural defences threw obstacles

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in its invaders' way. In the forest belts which stretched over vast spaces of country they found barriers which in all cases checked their advance and in some cases finally stopped it. The Kentishmen and the South Saxons were brought utterly to a standstill by the Andredsweald. The East Saxons could never pierce the woods of their western border. The Fens proved impassable to the Northfolk and the Southfolk of East-Anglia. It was only after a long and terrible struggle that the West-Saxons could hew their way through the forests which sheltered the "Gwent" of the southern coast. Their attempt to break out of the circle of woodland which girt in the downs was in fact fruitless for thirty years; and in the height of their later power they were thrown back from the forests of Cheshire.

*With-
drawal
of the
Britons.*

It is only by realizing in this way the physical as well as the moral circumstances of Britain that we can understand the character of its earlier conquest. Field by field, town by town, forest by forest, the land was won. And as each bit of ground was torn away by the stranger, the Briton sullenly withdrew from it only to turn doggedly and fight for the next. There is no need to believe that the clearing of the land meant so impossible a thing as the general slaughter of the men who held it. Slaughter there was, no doubt, on the battle-field or in towns like Anderida whose resistance woke wrath in their besiegers. But for the most part the Britons were not slaughtered; they were defeated and drew back. Such a withdrawal was only made possible by the slowness of the conquest. For it is not only the stoutness of its defence which distinguishes the conquest of Britain from that of the other provinces of the Empire, but the weakness of attack. As the resistance of the Britons was greater than that of the other provincials of Rome so the forces of their assailants were less. Attack by sea was less easy than attack by land, and the numbers who were brought across by the boats of Hengest or Cerdic cannot have rivalled those which followed Theodoric or Chlodewig across the Alps or the

Rhine. Landing in small parties, and but gradually reinforced by after-comers, the English invaders could only slowly and fitfully push the Britons back. The absence of any joint action among the assailants told in the same way. Though all spoke the same language and used the same laws, they had no such bond of political union as the Franks; and though all were bent on winning the same land, each band and each leader preferred their own separate course of action to any collective enterprise.

Under such conditions the overrunning of Britain could not fail to be a very different matter from the rapid and easy overrunning of such countries as Gaul. How slow the work of English conquest was may be seen from the fact that it took nearly thirty years to win Kent alone and sixty to complete the conquest of Southern Britain, and that the conquest of the bulk of the island was only wrought out after two centuries of bitter warfare. But it was just through the length of the struggle that of all the German conquests this proved the most thorough and complete. So far as the English sword in these earlier days had reached, Britain had become England, a land, that is, not of Britons but of Englishmen. Even if a few of the vanquished people lingered as slaves round the homesteads of their English conquerors, or a few of their household words mingled with the English tongue, doubtful exceptions such as these leave the main facts untouched. The keynote of the conquest was firmly struck. When the English invasion was stayed for a while by the civil wars of the invaders, the Briton had disappeared from the greater part of the land which had been his own; and the tongue, the religion, the laws of his English conquerors reigned without a break from Essex to Staffordshire and from the British Channel to the Firth of Forth.

For the driving out of the Briton was, as we have seen, but a prelude to the settlement of his conqueror. What strikes us at once in the new England is this, that it was the one purely German nation that rose upon the wreck of

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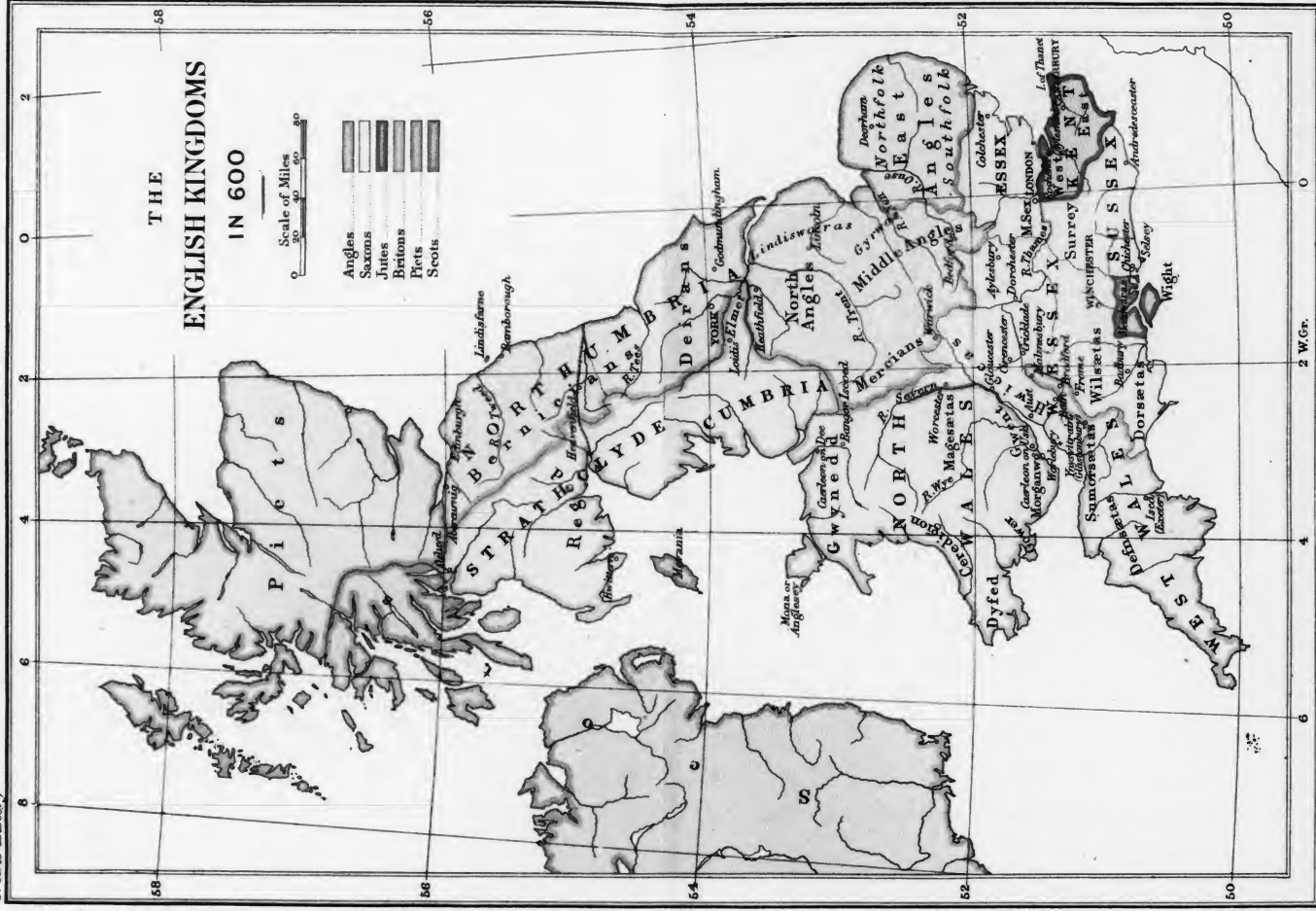
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English
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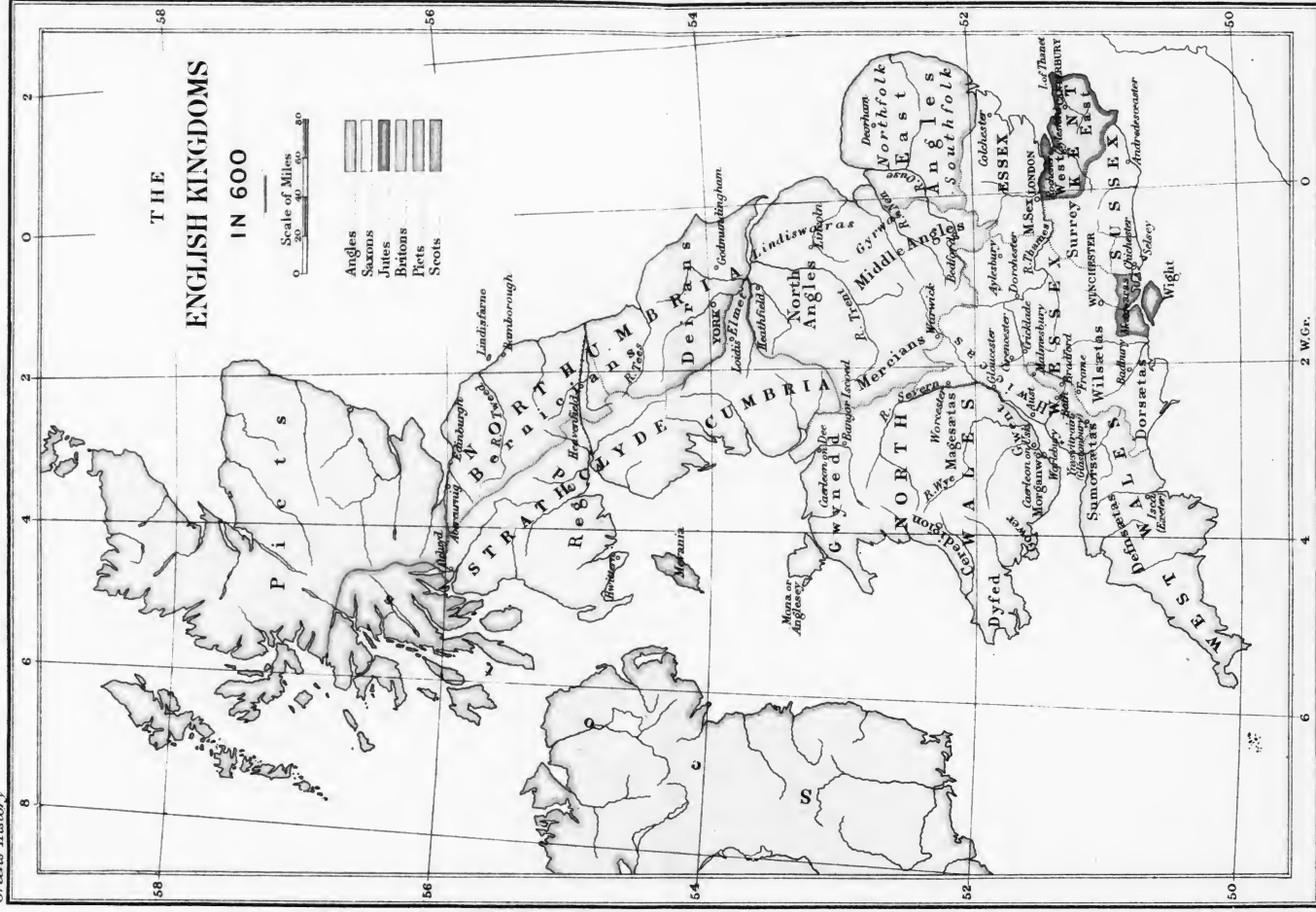
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Rome. In other lands, in Spain or Gaul or Italy, though they were equally conquered by German peoples, religion, social life, administrative order, still remained Roman. Britain was almost the only province of the Empire where Rome died into a vague tradition of the past. The whole organization of government and society disappeared with the people who used it. Roman roads indeed still led to desolate cities. Roman camps still crowned hill and down. The old divisions of the land remained to furnish bounds of field and farm for the new settlers. The Roman church, the Roman country-house, was left standing, though reft of priest and lord. But Rome was gone. The mosaics, the coins which we dig up in our fields are no relics of our English fathers, but of a world which our fathers' sword swept utterly away. Its law, its literature, its manners, its faith, went with it. Nothing was a stronger proof of the completeness of this destruction of all Roman life than the religious change which passed over the land. Alone among the German assailants of Rome the English stood aloof from the faith of the Empire they helped to overthrow. The new England was a heathen country. Homestead and boundary, the very days of the week, bore the names of new gods who displaced Christ.

As we stand amidst the ruins of town or country-house which recall to us the wealth and culture of Roman Britain, it is hard to believe that a conquest which left them heaps of crumbling stones was other than a curse to the land over which it passed. But if the new England which sprang from the wreck of Britain seemed for the moment a waste from which the arts, the letters, the refinement of the world had fled hopelessly away, it contained within itself germs of a nobler life than that which had been destroyed. The base of Roman society here as everywhere throughout the Roman world was the slave, the peasant who had been crushed by tyranny, political and social, into serfdom. The base of the new English society was the





freeman whom we have seen tilling, judging, or fighting for himself by the Northern Sea. However roughly he dealt with the material civilization of Britain while the struggle went on, it was impossible that such a man could be a mere destroyer. War in fact was no sooner over than the warrior settled down into the farmer, and the home of the ceorl rose beside the heap of goblin-haunted stones that marked the site of the villa he had burned. The settlement of the English in the conquered land was nothing less than an absolute transfer of English society in its completest form to the soil of Britain. The slowness of their advance, the small numbers of each separate band in its descent upon the coast, made it possible for the invaders to bring with them, or to call to them when their work was done, the wives and children, the læt and slave, even the cattle they had left behind them. The first wave of conquest was but the prelude to the gradual migration of a whole people. It was England which settled down on British soil, England with its own language, its own laws, its complete social fabric, its system of village life and village culture, its township and its hundred, its principle of kinship, its principle of representation. It was not as mere pirates or stray war-bands, but as peoples already made, and fitted by a common temper and common customs to draw together into our English nation in the days to come, that our fathers left their German home-land for the land in which we live. Their social and political organization remained radically unchanged. In each of the little kingdoms which rose on the wreck of Britain the host camped on the land it had won, and the divisions of the host supplied here as in its older home the rough groundwork of local distribution. The land occupied by the hundred warriors who formed the unit of military organization became perhaps the local hundred; but it is needless to attach any notion of precise uniformity, either in the number of settlers or in the area of their settlement, to such a process as this, any

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more than to the army organization which the process of distribution reflected. From the large amount of public land which we find existing afterwards it has been conjectured with some probability that the number of settlers was far too small to occupy the whole of the country at their disposal, and this unoccupied ground became "folk-land," the common property of the tribe as at a later time of the nation. What ground was actually occupied may have been assigned to each group and each family in the group by lot, and Eorl and Ceorl gathered round them their læt and slave as in their homeland by the Rhine or the Elbe. And with the English people passed to the shores of Britain all that was to make Englishmen what they are. For distant and dim as their life in that older England may have seemed to us, the whole after-life of Englishmen was there. In its village-moots lay our Parliament; in the gleeman of its village-feasts our Chaucer and our Shakespeare; in the pirate-bark stealing from creek to creek our Drakes and our Nelsons. Even the national temper was fully formed. Civilization, letters, science, religion itself, have done little to change the inner mood of Englishmen. That love of venture and of toil, of the sea and the fight, that trust in manhood and the might of man, that silent awe of the mysteries of life and death which lay deep in English souls then as now, passed with Englishmen to the land which Englishmen had won.

The
King.

But though English society passed thus in its completeness to the soil of Britain its primitive organization was affected in more ways than one by the transfer. In the first place conquest begat the King. It seems probable that the English had hitherto known nothing of Kings in their own fatherland, where each tribe was satisfied in peace time with the customary government of village-reeve and hundred-reeve and Ealdorman, while it gathered at fighting times under war leaders whom it chose for each campaign. But in the long and obstinate warfare which they waged against the Britons it was needful to find a common leader

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whom the various tribes engaged in conquests such as those of Wessex or Mercia might follow; and the ceaseless character of a struggle which left few intervals of rest or peace raised these leaders into a higher position than that of temporary chieftains. It was no doubt from this cause that we find Hengest and his son Æsc raised to the kingdom in Kent, or Ælle in Sussex, or Cerdic and Cynric among the West Saxons. The association of son with father in this new kingship marked the hereditary character which distinguished it from the temporary office of an Ealdorman. The change was undoubtedly a great one, but it was less than the modern conception of kingship would lead us to imagine. Hereditary as the succession was within a single house, each successive King was still the free choice of his people, and for centuries to come it was held within a people's right to pass over a claimant too weak or too wicked for the throne. In war indeed the King was supreme. But in peace his power was narrowly bounded by the customs of his people and the rede of his wise men. Justice was not as yet the King's justice, it was the justice of village and hundred and folk in town-moot and hundred-moot and folk-moot. It was only with the assent of the wise men that the King could make laws and declare war and assign public lands and name public officers. Above all, should his will be to break through the free customs of his people, he was without the means of putting his will into action, for the one force he could call on was the host, and the host was the people itself in arms.

With the new English King rose a new order of English nobles. The social distinction of the Eorl was founded on the peculiar purity of his blood, on his long descent from the original settler around whom township and thorp grew up. A new distinction was now to be found in service done to the King. From the earliest times of German society it had been the wont of young men greedy of honour or seeking training in arms to bind themselves as "comrades" to king or chief. The leader

The
Thegn.

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them a local nobility, no longer bound to actual service in the king's household or the king's war-band, but still bound to him by personal ties of allegiance far closer than those which bound an eorl to the chosen war-leader of the tribe. In a word, thegnhood contained within itself the germ of that later feudalism which was to battle so fiercely with the Teutonic freedom out of which it grew.

But the strife between the conquering tribes which at once followed on their conquest of Britain was to bring about changes even more momentous in the development of the English people. While Jute and Saxon and Engle were making themselves masters of central and southern Britain, the English who had landed on its northernmost shores had been slowly winning for themselves the coast district between the Forth and the Tyne which bore the name of Bernicia. Their progress seems to have been small till they were gathered into a kingdom in 547 by Ida the "Flame-bearer" who found a site for his King's town on the impregnable rock of Bamborough; nor was it till the reign of his fourth son Æthelric that they gained full mastery over the Britons along their western border. But once masters of the Britons the Bernician Englishmen turned to conquer their English neighbours to the south, the men of Deira, whose first King Ælla was now sinking to the grave. The struggle filled the foreign markets with English slaves, and one of the most memorable stories in our history shows us a group of such captives as they stood in the market-place of Rome, it may be in the great Forum of Trajan which still in its decay recalled the glories of the Imperial City. Their white bodies, their fair faces, their golden hair was noted by a deacon who passed by. "From what country do these slaves come?" Gregory asked the trader who brought them. The slave-dealer answered "They are English," or as the word ran in the Latin form it would bear at Rome "they are Angles." The deacon's pity veiled itself in poetic humour. "Not Angles but Angels" he said, "with faces so angel-

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The Ber-
nicians.

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While Gregory was thus playing with *Ælla's* name the old King passed away, and with his death in 589 the resistance of his kingdom seems to have ceased. His house fled over the western border to find refuge among the Welsh, and *Æthelric* of *Bernicia* entered *Deira* in triumph. A new age of our history opens in this submission of one English people to another. When the two kingdoms were united under a common lord the period of national formation began. If a new England sprang out of the mass of English states which covered Britain after its conquest, we owe it to the gradual submission of the smaller peoples to the supremacy of a common political head. The difference in power between state and state which inevitably led to this process of union was due to the character which the conquest of Britain was now assuming. Up to this time all the kingdoms which had been established by the invaders had stood in the main on a footing of equality. All had taken an independent share in the work of conquest. Though the oneness of a common blood and a common speech was recognized by all we find no traces of any common action or common rule. Even in the two groups of kingdoms, the five English and the five Saxon kingdoms, which occupied Britain south of the Humber, the relations of each member of the group to its fellows seem to have been merely local. It was only locally that East and West and South and North English were grouped round the Middle English of *Leicester*, or East and West and South and North

Saxons round the Middle Saxons about London. In neither instance do we find any real trace of a confederacy, or of the rule of one member of the group over the others; while north of the Humber the feeling between the Englishmen of Yorkshire and the Englishmen who had settled towards the Firth of Forth was one of hostility rather than of friendship. But this age of isolation, of equality, of independence, had now come to an end. The progress of the conquest had drawn a sharp line between the kingdoms of the conquerors. The work of half of them was done. In the south of the island not only Kent but Sussex, Essex, and Middlesex were surrounded by English territory, and hindered by that single fact from all further growth. The same fate had befallen the East Engle, the South Engle, the Middle and the North Engle. The West Saxons on the other hand and the West Engle, or Mercians, still remained free to conquer and expand on the south of the Humber, as the Englishmen of *Deira* and *Bernicia* remained free to the north of that river. It was plain therefore that from this moment the growth of these powers would throw their fellow kingdoms into the background, and that with an ever-growing inequality of strength must come a new arrangement of political forces. The greater kingdoms would in the end be drawn to subject and absorb the lesser ones, and to the war between Englishman and Briton would be added a struggle between Englishman and Englishman.

It was through this struggle and the establishment of a lordship on the part of the stronger and growing states over their weaker and stationary fellows that the English kingdoms were to make their first step towards union in a single England. Such an overlordship seemed destined but a few years before to fall to the lot of Wessex. The victories of *Ceawlin* and *Cuthwulf* left it the largest of the English kingdoms. None of its fellow states seemed able to hold their own against a power which stretched

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from the Chilterns to the Severn and from the Channel to the Ouse. But after its defeat in the march upon Chester Wessex suddenly broke down into a chaos of warring tribes; and her place was taken by two powers whose rise to greatness was as sudden as her fall. The first of these was Kent. The Kentish King Æthelberht found himself hemmed in on every side by English territory; and since conquest over Britons was denied him he sought a new sphere of action in setting his kingdom at the head of the conquerors of the south. The break up of Wessex no doubt aided his attempt; but we know little of the causes or events which brought about his success. We know only that the supremacy of the Kentish King was owned at last by the English peoples of the east and centre of Britain. But it was not by her political action that Kent was in the end to further the creation of a single England; for the lordship which Æthelberht built up was doomed to fall for ever with his death, and yet his death left Kent the centre of a national union far wider as it was far more enduring than the petty lordship which stretched over Eastern Britain. Years had passed by since Gregory pitied the English slaves in the market-place of Rome. As Bishop of the Imperial City he at last found himself in a position to carry out his dream of winning Britain to the faith, and an opening was given him by Æthelberht's marriage with Bercta, a daughter of the Frankish King Charibert of Paris. Bercta like her Frankish kindred was a Christian; a Christian Bishop accompanied her from Gaul; and a ruined Christian church, the church of St. Martin beside the royal city of Canterbury, was given them for their worship. The King himself remained true to the gods of his fathers; but his marriage no doubt encouraged Gregory to send a Roman abbot, Augustine, at the head of a band of monks to preach the Gospel to the English people. The missionaries landed in 597 in the Isle of Thanet, at the spot where Hengest had landed more than a century before; and Æthelberht received

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them sitting in the open air on the chalk-down above Minster where the eye now-a-days catches miles away over the marshes the dim tower of Canterbury. The King listened patiently to the long sermon of Augustine as the interpreters the abbot had brought with him from Gaul rendered it in the English tongue. "Your words are fair," Æthelberht replied at last with English good sense, "but they are new and of doubtful meaning." For himself, he said, he refused to forsake the gods of his fathers, but with the usual religious tolerance of the German race he promised shelter and protection to the strangers. The band of monks entered Canterbury bearing before them a silver cross with a picture of Christ, and singing in concert the strains of the litany of their Church. "Turn from this city, O Lord," they sang "Thine anger and wrath, and turn it from Thy holy house, for we have sinned." And then in strange contrast came the jubilant cry of the older Hebrew worship, the cry which Gregory had wrested in prophetic earnestness from the name of the Yorkshire king in the Roman market-place, "Alleluia!"

It was thus that the spot which witnessed the landing of Hengest became yet better known as the landing-place of Augustine. But the second landing at Ebbsfleet was in no small measure a reversal and undoing of the first. "Strangers from Rome" was the title with which the missionaries first fronted the English king. The march of the monks as they chaunted their solemn litany was in one sense a return of the Roman legions who withdrew at the trumpet-call of Alaric. It was to the tongue and the thought not of Gregory only but of the men whom his Jutish fathers had slaughtered or driven out that Æthelberht listened in the preaching of Augustine. Canterbury, the earliest royal city of German England, became a centre of Latin influence. The Roman tongue became again one of the tongues of Britain, the language of its worship, its correspondence, its literature. But more than

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the tongue of Rome returned with Augustine. Practically his landing renewed that union with the Western world which the landing of Hengest had destroyed. The new England was admitted into the older commonwealth of nations. The civilization, art, letters, which had fled before the sword of the English conquerors returned with the Christian faith. The great fabric of the Roman law indeed never took root in England, but it is impossible not to recognize the result of the influence of the Roman missionaries in the fact that codes of the customary English law began to be put in writing soon after their arrival.

*Æthel-
frith.*

A year passed before Æthelberht yielded to the preaching of Augustine. But from the moment of his conversion the new faith advanced rapidly and the Kentish men crowded to baptism in the train of their king. The new religion was carried beyond the bounds of Kent by the supremacy which Æthelberht wielded over the neighbouring kingdoms. Sæberht, King of the East-Saxons, received a bishop sent from Kent, and suffered him to build up again a Christian church in what was now his subject city of London, while the East-Anglian King Rædwald resolved to serve Christ and the older gods together. But while Æthelberht was thus furnishing a future centre of spiritual unity in Canterbury, the see to which Augustine was consecrated, the growth of Northumbria was pointing it out as the coming political centre of the new England. In 593, four years before the landing of the missionaries in Kent, Æthelric was succeeded by his son Æthelfrith, and the new king took up the work of conquest with a vigour greater than had yet been shown by any English leader. For ten years he waged war with the Britons of Strathclyde, a tract which stretched along his western border from Dumbarton to Carlisle. The contest ended in a great battle at Dægsa's Stan, perhaps Dawston in Liddesdale; and Æthelfrith turned to deliver a yet more crushing blow on his southern border. British kingdoms still

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stretched from Clyde-mouth to the mouth of Severn; and had their line remained unbroken the British resistance might yet have withstood the English advance. It was with a sound political instinct therefore that Æthelfrith marched in 607 upon Chester, the point where the kingdom of Cumbria, a kingdom which stretched from the Lune to the Dee, linked itself to the British states of what we now call Wales. Hard by the city two thousand monks were gathered in one of those vast religious settlements which were characteristic of Celtic Christianity, and after a three days' fast a crowd of these ascetics followed the British army to the field. Æthelfrith watched the wild gestures of the monks as they stood apart from the host with arms outstretched in prayer, and bade his men slay them in the coming fight. "Bear they arms or no," said the King, "they war against us when they cry against us to their God," and in the surprise and rout which followed the monks were the first to fall.

With the battle of Chester Britain, as a single political body, ceased to exist. By their victory at Deorham the West-Saxons had cut off the Britons of Dorset, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall from the general body of their race. By Æthelfrith's victory at Chester and the reduction of southern Lancashire which followed it what remained of Britain was broken into two several parts. From this time therefore the character of the English conquest of Britain changes. The warfare of Briton and Englishman died down into a warfare of separate English kingdoms against separate British kingdoms, of Northumbria against Cumbria and Strathclyde, of Mercia against modern Wales, of Wessex against the tract of British country from Mendip to the Land's End. But great as was the importance of the battle of Chester to the fortunes of Britain, it was of still greater importance to the fortunes of England itself. The drift towards national unity had already begun, but from the moment of Æthelfrith's victory this drift became the main current of our history.

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Masters of the larger and richer part of the land, its conquerors were no longer drawn greedily westward by the hope of plunder; while the severance of the British kingdoms took from their enemies the pressure of a common danger. The conquests of Æthelfrith left him without a rival in military power, and he turned from victories over the Welsh, as their English foes called the Britons, to the building up of a lordship over his own countrymen.

Eadwine.

The power of Æthelberht seems to have declined with old age, and though the Essex men still owned his supremacy, the English tribes of Mid-Britain shook it off. So strong however had the instinct of union now become, that we hear nothing of any return to their old isolation. Mercians and Southumbrians, Middle-English and South-English now owned the lordship of the East-English King Rædwald. The shelter given by Rædwald to Ælla's son Eadwine served as a pretext for a Northumbrian attack. Fortune however deserted Æthelfrith, and a snatch of northern song still tells of the day when the river Idle by Retford saw his defeat and fall. But the greatness of Northumbria survived its King. In 617 Eadwine was welcomed back by his own men of Deira; and his conquest of Bernicia maintained that union of the two realms which the Bernician conquest of Deira had first brought about. The greatness of Northumbria now reached its height. Within his own dominions, Eadwine displayed a genius for civil government which shews how utterly the mere age of conquest had passed away. With him began the English proverb so often applied to after kings: "A woman with her babe might walk scatheless from sea to sea in Eadwine's day." Peaceful communication revived along the deserted highways; the springs by the roadside were marked with stakes, and a cup of brass set beside each for the traveller's refreshment. Some faint traditions of the Roman past may have flung their glory round this new "Empire of the English;" a royal standard of purple and gold floated before Eadwine as he rode

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through the villages; a feather tuft attached to a spear, the Roman tufa, preceded him as he walked through the streets. The Northumbrian king became in fact supreme over Britain as no king of English blood had been before. Northward his frontier reached to the Firth of Forth, and here, if we trust tradition, Eadwine founded a city which bore his name, Edinburgh, Eadwine's burgh. To the west his arms crushed the long resistance of Elmet, the district about Leeds; he was master of Chester, and the fleet he equipped there subdued the isles of Anglesea and Man. South of the Humber he was owned as overlord by the five English states of Mid-Britain. The West-Saxons remained awhile independent. But revolt and slaughter had fatally broken their power when Eadwine attacked them. A story preserved by Bæda tells something of the fierceness of the struggle which ended in the subjection of the south to the overlordship of Northumbria. In an Easter-court which he held in his royal city by the river Derwent, Eadwine gave audience to Eumer, an envoy of Wessex, who brought a message from its king. In the midst of the conference Eumer started to his feet, drew a dagger from his robe, and rushed on the Northumbrian sovereign. Lilla, one of the King's war-band, threw himself between Eadwine and his assassin; but so furious was the stroke that even through Lilla's body the dagger still reached its aim. The king however recovered from his wound to march on the West-Saxons; he slew or subdued all who had conspired against him, and returned victorious to his own country.

Kent had bound itself to him by giving him its King's daughter as a wife, a step which probably marked political subordination; and with the Kentish queen had come Paulinus, one of Augustine's followers, whose tall stooping form, slender aquiline nose, and black hair falling round a thin worn face, were long remembered in the North. Moved by his queen's prayers Eadwine promised to become Christian if he returned successful from Wessex; and the

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of North-
umbria.*

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wise men of Northumbria gathered to deliberate on the new faith to which he bowed. To finer minds its charm lay then as now in the light it threw on the darkness which encompassed men's lives, the darkness of the future as of the past. "So seems the life of man, O king," burst forth an aged Ealdorman "as a sparrow's flight through the hall when a man is sitting at meat in winter-tide with the warm fire lighted on the hearth but the chill rain-storm without. The sparrow flies in at one door and tarries for a moment in the light and heat of the hearth-fire, and then flying forth from the other vanishes into the wintry darkness whence it came. So tarries for a moment the life of man in our sight, but what is before it, what after it, we know not. If this new teaching tell us aught certainly of these, let us follow it." Coarser argument told on the crowd. "None of your people, Eadwine, have worshipped the gods more busily than I," said Coifi the priest, "yet there are many more favoured and more fortunate. Were these gods good for anything they would help their worshippers." Then leaping on horseback, he hurled his spear into the sacred temple at Godmanham, and with the rest of the Witan embraced the religion of the king.

Penda.

But the faith of Woden and Thunder was not to fall without a struggle. Even in Kent a reaction against the new creed began with the death of Æthelberht. The young Kings of the East-Saxons burst into the church where the Bishop of London was administering the Eucharist to the people, crying "Give us that white bread you gave to our father Saba," and on the bishop's refusal drove him from their realm. This earlier tide of reaction was checked by Eadwine's conversion; but Mercia, which had as yet owned the supremacy of Northumbria, sprang into a sudden greatness as the champion of the heathen gods. Its King, Penda, saw in the rally of the old religion a chance of winning back his people's freedom and giving it the lead among the tribes about it. Originally mere settlers along the Upper Trent, the position of

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the Mercians on the Welsh border invited them to widen their possessions by conquest while the rest of their Anglian neighbours were shut off from any chance of expansion. Their fights along the frontier too kept their warlike energy at its height. Penda must have already asserted his superiority over the four other English tribes of Mid-Britain before he could have ventured to attack Wessex and tear from it in 628 the country of the Hwiccas and Magesætas on the Severn. Even with this accession of strength however he was still no match for Northumbria. But the war of the English people with the Britons seems at this moment to have died down for a season, and the Mercian ruler boldly broke through the barrier which had parted the two races till now by allying himself with a Welsh King, Cadwallon, for a joint attack on Eadwine. The armies met in 633 at a place called Hæthfeld, and in the fight which followed Eadwine was defeated and slain.

Bernicia seized on the fall of Eadwine to recall the line of Æthelfrith to its throne; and after a year of anarchy his second son, Oswald, became its King. The Welsh had remained encamped in the heart of the north, and Oswald's first fight was with Cadwallon. A small Northumbrian force gathered in 635 near the Roman Wall, and pledged itself at the new King's bidding to become Christian if it conquered in the fight. Cadwallon fell fighting on the "Heaven's Field," as after times called the field of battle; the submission of Deira to the conqueror restored the kingdom of Northumbria; and for nine years the power of Oswald equalled that of Eadwine. It was not the Church of Paulinus which nerved Oswald to this struggle for the Cross, or which carried out in Bernicia the work of conversion which his victory began. Paulinus fled from Northumbria at Eadwine's fall; and the Roman Church, though established in Kent, did little in contending elsewhere against the heathen reaction. Its place in the conversion of northern England was taken by missionaries from Ireland. To understand the true

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meaning of this change we must remember how greatly the Christian Church in the west had been affected by the German invasion. Before the landing of the English in Britain the Christian Church stretched in an unbroken line across Western Europe to the furthest coasts of Ireland. The conquest of Britain by the pagan English thrust a wedge of heathendom into the heart of this great communion and broke it into two unequal parts. On one side lay Italy, Spain, and Gaul, whose churches owned obedience to and remained in direct contact with the See of Rome, on the other, practically cut off from the general body of Christendom, lay the Church of Ireland. But the condition of the two portions of Western Christendom was very different. While the vigour of Christianity in Italy and Gaul and Spain was exhausted in a bare struggle for life, Ireland, which remained unscourged by invaders, drew from its conversion an energy such as it has never known since. Christianity was received there with a burst of popular enthusiasm, and letters and arts sprang up rapidly in its train. The science and Biblical knowledge which fled from the Continent took refuge in its schools. The new Christian life soon beat too strongly to brook confinement within the bounds of Ireland itself. Patrick, the first missionary of the island, had not been half a century dead when Irish Christianity flung itself with a fiery zeal into battle with the mass of heathenism which was rolling in upon the Christian world. Irish missionaries laboured among the Picts of the Highlands and among the Frisians of the northern seas. An Irish missionary, Columban, founded monasteries in Burgundy and the Apennines. The canton of St. Gall still commemorates in its name another Irish missionary before whom the spirits of flood and fell fled wailing over the waters of the Lake of Constance. For a time it seemed as if the course of the world's history was to be changed, as if the older Celtic race that Roman and German had swept before them had turned to the moral

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conquest of their conquerors, as if Celtic and not Latin Christianity was to mould the destinies of the Churches of the West.

On a low island of barren gneiss-rock off the west coast of Scotland an Irish refugee, Columba, had raised the famous mission-station of Iona. It was within its walls that Oswald in youth found refuge, and on his accession to the throne of Northumbria he called for missionaries from among its monks. The first preacher sent in answer to his call obtained little success. He declared on his return that among a people so stubborn and barbarous as the Northumbrian folk success was impossible. "Was it their stubbornness or your severity?" asked Aidan, a brother sitting by; "did you forget God's word to give them the milk first and then the meat?" All eyes turned on the speaker as fittest to undertake the abandoned mission, and Aidan sailing at their bidding fixed his bishop's see in the island-peninsula of Lindisfarne. Thence, from a monastery which gave to the spot its after name of Holy Island, preachers poured forth over the heathen realms. Aidan himself wandered on foot, preaching among the peasants of Yorkshire and Northumbria. In his own court the King acted as interpreter to the Irish missionaries in their efforts to convert his thegns. A new conception of kingship indeed began to blend itself with that of the warlike glory of Æthelfrith or the wise administration of Eadwine, and the moral power which was to reach its height in Ælfred first dawned in the story of Oswald. For after-times the memory of Oswald's greatness was lost in the memory of his piety. "By reason of his constant habit of praying or giving thanks to the Lord he was wont wherever he sat to hold his hands upturned on his knees." As he feasted with Bishop Aidan by his side, the thegn, or noble of his war-band, whom he had set to give alms to the poor at his gate told him of a multitude that still waited fasting without. The King at once bade the untasted meat before him be carried to the poor, and his silver dish be parted

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piecemeal among them. Aidan seized the royal hand and blessed it. "May this hand," he cried, "never grow old." Oswald's lordship stretched as widely over Britain as that of his predecessor Eadwine. In him even more than in Eadwine men saw some faint likeness of the older Emperors; once indeed a writer from the land of the Picts calls Oswald "Emperor of the whole of Britain." His power was bent to carry forward the conversion of all England, but prisoned as it was to the central districts of the country heathendom fought desperately for life. Penda was still its rallying-point. His long reign was one continuous battle with the new religion; but it was a battle rather with the supremacy of Christian Northumbria than with the supremacy of the Cross. East-Anglia became at last the field of contest between the two powers; and in 642 Oswald marched to deliver it from the Mercian rule. But his doom was the doom of Eadwine, and in a battle called the battle of the Maserfeld he was overthrown and slain. For a few years after his victory at the Maserfeld, Penda stood supreme in Britain. Heathenism triumphed with him. If Wessex did not own his overlordship as it had owned that of Oswald, its King threw off the Christian faith which he had embraced but a few years back at the preaching of Birinus. Even Deira seems to have owned Penda's sway. Bernicia alone, though distracted by civil war between rival claimants for its throne, refused to yield. Year by year the Mercian King carried his ravages over the north; once he reached even the royal city, the impregnable rock-fortress of Bamborough. Despairing of success in an assault, he pulled down the cottages around, and piling their wood against its walls fired the mass in a fair wind that drove the flames on the town. "See, Lord, what ill Penda is doing," cried Aidan from his hermit cell in the islet of Farne, as he saw the smoke drifting over the city, and a change of wind—so ran the legend of Northumbria's agony—drove back the flames on those who kindled them. But burned and

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harried as it was, Bernicia still fought for the Cross. Oswiu, a third son of Æthelfrith, held his ground stoutly against Penda's inroads till their cessation enabled him to build up again the old Northumbrian kingdom by a march upon Deira. The union of the two realms was never henceforth to be dissolved; and its influence was at once seen in the renewal of Christianity throughout Britain. East Anglia, conquered as it was, had clung to its faith. Wessex quietly became Christian again. Penda's own son, whom he had set over the Middle English, received baptism and teachers from Lindisfarne. At last the missionaries of the new belief appeared fearlessly among the Mercians themselves. Penda gave them no hindrance. In words that mark the temper of a man of whom we would willingly know more, Bæda tells us that the old King only "hated and scorned those whom he saw not doing the works of the faith they had received." His attitude shows that Penda looked with the tolerance of his race on all questions of creed, and that he was fighting less for heathenism than for political independence. And now the growing power of Oswiu called him to the old struggle with Northumbria. In 655 he met Oswiu in the field of Winwæd by Leeds. It was in vain that the Northumbrian sought to avert Penda's attack by offers of ornaments and costly gifts. "If the pagans will not accept them," Oswiu cried at last, "let us offer them to One that will;" and he vowed that if successful he would dedicate his daughter to God, and endow twelve monasteries in his realm. Victory at last declared for the faith of Christ. Penda himself fell on the field. The river over which the Mercians fled was swollen with a great rain; it swept away the fragments of the heathen host, and the cause of the older gods was lost for ever.

The terrible struggle between heathendom and Christianity was followed by a long and profound peace. For three years after the battle of Winwæd Mercia was governed by Northumbrian thegns in Oswiu's name. The

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winning of central England was a victory for Irish Christianity as well as for Oswiu. Even in Mercia itself heathendom was dead with Penda. "Being thus freed," Bæda tells us, "the Mercians with their King rejoiced to serve the true King, Christ." Its three provinces, the earlier Mercia, the Middle-English, and the Lindiswaras, were united in the bishopric of the missionary Ceadda, the St. Chad to whom Lichfield is still dedicated. Ceadda was a monk of Lindisfarne, so simple and lowly in temper that he travelled on foot on his long mission journeys till Archbishop Theodore with his own hands lifted him on horseback. The old Celtic poetry breaks out in his death-legend, as it tells us how voices of singers singing sweetly descended from heaven to the little cell beside St. Mary's Church where the bishop lay dying. Then "the same song ascended from the roof again, and returned heavenward by the way that it came." It was the soul of his brother, the missionary Cedd, come with a choir of angels to solace the last hours of Ceadda.

Cuthbert.

In Northumbria the work of his fellow missionaries has almost been lost in the glory of Cuthbert. No story better lights up for us the new religious life of the time than the story of this Apostle of the Lowlands. Born on the southern edge of the Lammermoor, Cuthbert found shelter at eight years old in a widow's house in the little village of Wrangholm. Already in youth his robust frame had a poetic sensibility which caught even in the chance word of a game a call to higher things, and a passing attack of lameness deepened the religious impression. A traveller coming in his white mantle over the hillside and stopping his horse to tend Cuthbert's injured knee seemed to him an angel. The boy's shepherd life carried him to the bleak upland, still famous as a sheepwalk, though a scant herbage scarce veils the whinstone rock. There meteors plunging into the night became to him a company of angelic spirits carrying the soul of Bishop Aidan heavenward, and his longings slowly settled into a resolute will towards a

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religious life. In 651 he made his way to a group of straw-thatched log-huts in the midst of untilled solitudes where a few Irish monks from Lindisfarne had settled in the mission-station of Melrose. To-day the land is a land of poetry and romance. Cheviot and Lammermoor, Ettrick and Teviotdale, Yarrow and Annan-water, are musical with old ballads and border minstrelsy. Agriculture has chosen its valleys for her favourite seat, and drainage and steam-power have turned sedgy marshes into farm and meadow. But to see the Lowlands as they were in Cuthbert's day we must sweep meadow and farm away again, and replace them by vast solitudes, dotted here and there with clusters of wooden hovels and crossed by boggy tracks, over which travellers rode spear in hand and eye kept cautiously about them. The Northumbrian peasantry among whom he journeyed were for the most part Christians only in name. With Teutonic indifference they yielded to their thegns in nominally accepting the new Christianity as these had yielded to the king. But they retained their old superstitions side by side with the new worship; plague or mishap drove them back to a reliance on their heathen charms and amulets; and if trouble befell the Christian preachers who came settling among them, they took it as proof of the wrath of the older gods. When some log-rafts which were floating down the Tyne for the construction of an abbey at its mouth drifted with the monks who were at work on them out to sea, the rustic bystanders shouted, "Let nobody pray for them; let nobody pity these men; for they have taken away from us our old worship, and how their new-fangled customs are to be kept nobody knows." On foot, on horseback, Cuthbert wandered among listeners such as these, choosing above all the remoter mountain villages from whose roughness and poverty other teachers turned aside. Unlike his Irish comrades, he needed no interpreter as he passed from village to village; the frugal, long-headed Northumbrians listened willingly to one who was himself a peasant of the

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Lowlands, and who had caught the rough Northumbrian burr along the banks of the Leader. His patience, his humorous good sense, the sweetness of his look, told for him, and not less the stout vigorous frame which fitted the peasant-preacher for the hard life he had chosen. "Never did man die of hunger who served God faithfully," he would say, when nightfall found them supperless in the waste. "Look at the eagle overhead! God can feed us through him if He will"—and once at least he owed his meal to a fish that the scared bird let fall. A snowstorm drove his boat on the coast of Fife. "The snow closes the road along the shore," mourned his comrades; "the storm bars our way over sea." "There is still the way of heaven that lies open," said Cuthbert.

Cædmon.

While missionaries were thus labouring among its peasantry, Northumbria saw the rise of a number of monasteries, not bound indeed by the strict ties of the Benedictine rule, but gathered on the loose Celtic model of the family or the clan round some noble and wealthy person who sought devotional retirement. The most notable and wealthy of these houses was that of Streoneshalh, where Hild, a woman of royal race, reared her abbey on the cliffs of Whitby, looking out over the Northern Sea. Hild was a Northumbrian Deborah whose counsel was sought even by kings; and the double monastery over which she ruled became a seminary of bishops and priests. The sainted John of Beverley was among her scholars. But the name which really throws glory over Whitby is the name of a cowherd from whose lips during the reign of Oswiu flowed the first great English song. Though well advanced in years, Cædmon had learned nothing of the art of verse, the alliterative jingle so common among his fellows, "wherefore being sometimes at feasts, when all agreed for glee's sake to sing in turn, he no sooner saw the harp come towards him than he rose from the board and went homewards. Once when he had done thus, and gone from the feast to the

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stable where he had that night charge of the cattle, there appeared to him in his sleep One who said, greeting him by name, 'Sing, Cædmon, some song to Me.' 'I cannot sing,' he answered; 'for this cause left I the feast and came hither.' He who talked with him answered 'However that be, you shall sing to Me.' 'What shall I sing?' rejoined Cædmon. 'The beginning of created things,' replied He. In the morning the cowherd stood before Hild and told his dream. Abbess and brethren alike concluded 'that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by the Lord.' They translated for Cædmon a passage in Holy Writ, 'bidding him, if he could, put the same into verse.' The next morning he gave it them composed in excellent verse, whereon the abbess, understanding the divine grace in the man, bade him quit the secular habit and take on him the monastic life." Piece by piece the sacred story was thus thrown into Cædmon's poem. "He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel; of their departure from Egypt and entering into the Promised Land; of the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ, and of His ascension; of the terror of future judgement, the horror of hell-pangs, and the joys of heaven."

But even while Cædmon was singing the glories of Northumbria and of the Irish Church were passing away. The revival of Mercia was as rapid as its fall. Only a few years after Penda's defeat the Mercians threw off Oswiu's yoke and set Wulfhere, a son of Penda, on their throne. They were aided in their revolt, no doubt, by a religious strife which was now rending the Northumbrian realm. The labour of Aidan, the victories of Oswald and Oswiu, seemed to have annexed the north to the Irish Church. The monks of Lindisfarne, or of the new religious houses whose foundation followed that of Lindisfarne, looked for their ecclesiastical tradition, not to Rome but to Ireland; and quoted for their guidance the instructions, not of Gregory, but of Columba. Whatever claims of supremacy

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over the whole English Church might be pressed by the see of Canterbury, the real metropolitan of the Church as it existed in the North of England was the Abbot of Iona. But Oswiu's queen brought with her from Kent the loyalty of the Kentish Church to the Roman see; and the visit of two young thegns to the Imperial city raised their love of Rome into a passionate fanaticism. The elder of these, Benedict Biscop, returned to denounce the usages in which the Irish Church differed from the Roman as schismatic; and the vigour of his comrade Wilfrid stirred so hot a strife that Oswiu was prevailed upon to summon in 664 a great council at Whitby, where the future ecclesiastical allegiance of his realm should be decided. The points actually contested were trivial enough. Colman, Aidan's successor at Holy Island, pleaded for the Irish fashion of the tonsure, and for the Irish time of keeping Easter: Wilfrid pleaded for the Roman. The one disputant appealed to the authority of Columba, the other to that of St. Peter. "You own," cried the King at last to Colman, "that Christ gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven—has He given such power to Columba?" The bishop could but answer "No." "Then will I rather obey the porter of heaven," said Oswiu, "lest when I reach its gates he who has the keys in his keeping turn his back on me, and there be none to open." The humorous tone of Oswiu's decision could not hide its importance, and the synod had no sooner broken up, than Colman, followed by the whole of the Irish-born brethren and thirty of their English fellows, forsook the see of St. Aidan and sailed away to Iona. Trivial in fact as were the actual points of difference which severed the Roman Church from the Irish, the question to which communion Northumbria should belong was of immense moment to the after fortunes of England. Had the Church of Aidan finally won, the later ecclesiastical history of England would probably have resembled that of Ireland. Devoid of that power of organization which was the strength of the

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Roman Church, the Celtic Church in its own Irish home took the clan system of the country as the basis of its government. Tribal quarrels and ecclesiastical controversies became inextricably confounded; and the clergy, robbed of all really spiritual influence, contributed no element save that of disorder to the state. Hundreds of wandering bishops, a vast religious authority wielded by hereditary chieftains, the dissociation of piety from morality, the absence of those larger and more humanizing influences which contact with a wider world alone can give, this is a picture which the Irish Church of later times presents to us. It was from such a chaos as this that England was saved by the victory of Rome in the Synod of Whitby. But the success of Wilfrid dispelled a yet greater danger. Had England clung to the Irish Church it must have remained spiritually isolated from the bulk of the Western world. Fallen as Rome might be from its older greatness, it preserved the traditions of civilization, of letters and art and law. Its faith still served as a bond which held together the nations that sprang from the wreck of the Empire. To fight against Rome was, as Wilfrid said, "to fight against the world." To repulse Rome was to condemn England to isolation. Dimly as such thoughts may have presented themselves to Oswiu's mind, it was the instinct of a statesman that led him to set aside the love and gratitude of his youth and to link England to Rome in the Synod of Whitby.

Oswiu's assent to the vigorous measures of organization undertaken by a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, whom Rome despatched in 668 to secure England to her sway as Archbishop of Canterbury, marked a yet more decisive step in the new policy. The work of Theodore lay mainly in the organization of the episcopate, and thus the Church of England, as we know it to-day, is the work, so far as its outer form is concerned, of Theodore. His work was determined in its main outlines by the previous history of the English people. The conquest of the Continent had

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been wrought either by races which were already Christian, or by heathens who bowed to the Christian faith of the nations they conquered. To this oneness of religion between the German invaders of the Empire and their Roman subjects was owing the preservation of all that survived of the Roman world. The Church everywhere remained untouched. The Christian bishop became the defender of the conquered Italian or Gaul against his Gothic and Lombard conqueror, the mediator between the German and his subjects, the one bulwark against barbaric violence and oppression. To the barbarian, on the other hand, he was the representative of all that was venerable in the past, the living record of law, of letters, and of art. But in Britain the priesthood and the people had been driven out together. When Theodore came to organize the Church of England, the very memory of the older Christian Church which existed in Roman Britain had passed away. The first missionaries to the Englishmen, strangers in a heathen land, attached themselves necessarily to the courts of the kings, who were their earliest converts, and whose conversion was generally followed by that of their people. The English bishops were thus at first royal chaplains, and their diocese was naturally nothing but the kingdom. In this way realms which are all but forgotten are commemorated in the limits of existing sees. That of Rochester represented till of late an obscure kingdom of West Kent, and the frontier of the original kingdom of Mercia may be recovered by following the map of the ancient bishopric of Lichfield. In adding many sees to those he found Theodore was careful to make their dioceses co-extensive with existing tribal demarcations. But he soon passed from this extension of the episcopate to its organization. In his arrangement of dioceses, and the way in which he grouped them round the see of Canterbury, in his national synods and ecclesiastical canons, Theodore did unconsciously a political work. The old divisions of kingdoms and tribes about him,

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divisions which had sprung for the most part from mere accidents of the conquest, were now fast breaking down. The smaller states were by this time practically absorbed by the three larger ones, and of these three Mercia and Wessex were compelled to bow to the superiority of Northumbria. The tendency to national unity which was to characterize the new England had thus already declared itself; but the policy of Theodore clothed with a sacred form and surrounded with divine sanctions a unity which as yet rested on no basis but the sword. The single throne of the one Primate at Canterbury accustomed men's minds to the thought of a single throne for their one temporal overlord. The regular subordination of priest to bishop, of bishop to primate, in the administration of the Church, supplied a mould on which the civil organization of the state quietly shaped itself. Above all, the councils gathered by Theodore were the first of our national gatherings for general legislation. It was at a much later time that the Wise Men of Wessex, or Northumbria, or Mercia learned to come together in the Witenagemote of all England. The synods which Theodore convened as religiously representative of the whole English nation led the way by their example to our national parliaments. The canons which these synods enacted led the way to a national system of law.

The organization of the episcopate was followed by the organization of the parish system. The mission-station or monastery from which priest or bishop went forth on journey after journey to preach and baptize naturally disappeared as the land became Christian. The missionaries turned into settled clergy. As the King's chaplain became a bishop and the kingdom his diocese, so the chaplain of an English noble became the priest and the manor his parish. But this parish system is probably later than Theodore, and the system of tithes which has been sometimes coupled with his name dates only from the close of the eighth century. What was really due to him was the

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organization of the episcopate, and the impulse which this gave to national unity. But the movement towards unity found a sudden check in the revived strength of Mercia. Wulfhere proved a vigorous and active ruler, and the peaceful reign of Oswiu left him free to build up again during seventeen years of rule (657-675) that Mercian overlordship over the tribes of mid-England which had been lost at Penda's death. He had more than his father's success. Not only did Essex again own his supremacy but even London fell into Mercian hands. The West-Saxons were driven across the Thames, and nearly all their settlements to the north of that river were annexed to the Mercian realm. Wulfhere's supremacy soon reached even south of the Thames, for Sussex in its dread of West-Saxons found protection in accepting his overlordship, and its king was rewarded by a gift of the two outlying settlements of the Jutes—the Isle of Wight and the lands of the Meonwaras along the Southampton water—which we must suppose had been reduced by Mercian arms. The industrial progress of the Mercian kingdom went hand in hand with its military advance. The forests of its western border, the marshes of its eastern coast, were being cleared and drained by monastic colonies, whose success shows the hold which Christianity had now gained over its people. Heathenism indeed still held its own in the wild western woodlands and in the yet wilder fen-country on the eastern border of the kingdom which stretched from the "Holland," the sunk, hollow land of Lincolnshire, to the channel of the Ouse, a wilderness of shallow waters and reedy islets wrapped in its own dark mist-veil and tenanted only by flocks of screaming wild-fowl. But in either quarter the new faith made its way. In the western woods Bishop Egwine found a site for an abbey round which gathered the town of Evesham, and the eastern fen-land was soon filled with religious houses. Here through the liberality of King Wulfhere rose the abbey of Peterborough. Here too, Guthlac, a youth of the royal

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race of Mercia, sought a refuge from the world in the solitudes of Crowland, and so great was the reverence he won, that only two years had passed since his death when the stately Abbey of Crowland rose over his tomb. Earth was brought in boats to form a site; the buildings rested on oaken piles driven into the marsh; a great stone church replaced the hermit's cell; and the toil of the new brotherhood changed the pools around them into fertile meadow-land.

In spite however of this rapid recovery of its strength by Mercia Northumbria remained the dominant state in Britain: and Egfrith, who succeeded Oswiu in 670, so utterly defeated Wulfhere when war broke out between them that he was glad to purchase peace by the surrender of Lincolnshire. Peace would have been purchased more hardly had not Egfrith's ambition turned rather to conquests over the Briton than to victories over his fellow Englishmen. The war between Briton and Englishman which had languished since the battle of Chester had been revived some twelve years before by an advance of the West-Saxons to the south-west. Unable to save the possessions of Wessex north of the Thames from the grasp of Wulfhere, their king, Cenwalh, sought for compensation in an attack on his Welsh neighbours. A victory at Bradford on the Avon enabled him to overrun the country near Mendip which had till then been held by the Britons; and a second campaign in 658, which ended in a victory on the skirts of the great forest that covered Somerset to the east, settled the West-Saxons as conquerors round the sources of the Parret. It may have been the example of the West-Saxons which spurred Egfrith to a series of attacks upon his British neighbours in the west which widened the bounds of his kingdom. His reign marks the highest pitch of Northumbrian power. His armies chased the Britons from the kingdom of Cumbria and made the district of Carlisle English ground. A large part of the conquered country was bestowed upon

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the see of Lindisfarne, which was at this time filled by one whom we have seen before labouring as the Apostle of the Lowlands. Cuthbert had found a new mission-station in Holy Island, and preached among the moors of Northumberland as he had preached beside the banks of Tweed. He remained there through the great secession which followed on the Synod of Whitby, and became prior of the dwindled company of brethren, now torn with endless disputes against which his patience and good humour struggled in vain. Worn out at last, he fled to a little island of basaltic rock, one of the Farne group not far from Ida's fortress of Bamborough, strewn for the most part with kelp and sea-weed, the home of the gull and the seal. In the midst of it rose his hut of rough stones and turf, dug down within deep into the rock, and roofed with logs and straw. But the reverence for his sanctity dragged Cuthbert back to fill the vacant see of Lindisfarne. He entered Carlisle, which the King had bestowed upon the bishopric, at a moment when all Northumbria was waiting for news of a fresh campaign of Ecgrith's against the Britons in the north. The Firth of Forth had long been the limit of Northumbria, but the Picts to the north of it owned Ecgrith's supremacy. In 685 however the King resolved on their actual subjection and marched across the Forth. A sense of coming ill weighed on Northumbria, and its dread was quickened by a memory of the curses which had been pronounced by the bishops of Ireland on its King, when his navy, setting out a year before from the newly-conquered western coast, swept the Irish shores in a raid which seemed like sacrilege to those who loved the home of Aidan and Columba. As Cuthbert bent over a Roman fountain which still stood unharmed amongst the ruins of Carlisle, the anxious bystanders thought they caught words of ill-omen falling from the old man's lips. "Perhaps," he seemed to murmur, "at this very hour the peril of the fight is over and done." "Watch and pray," he said, when they questioned him on the morrow;

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"watch and pray." In a few days more a solitary fugitive escaped from the slaughter told that the Picts had turned desperately to bay as the English army entered Fife; and that Ecgrith and the flower of his nobles lay, a ghastly ring of corpses, on the far-off moorland of Nectansmere.

The blow was a fatal one for Northumbrian greatness, for while the Picts pressed on the kingdom from the north Æthelred, Wulfhere's successor, attacked it on the Mercian border, and the war was only ended by a peace which left him master of Middle England and free to attempt the direct conquest of the south. For the moment this attempt proved a fruitless one. Mercia was still too weak to grasp the lordship which was slipping from Northumbria's hands, while Wessex which seemed her destined prey rose at this moment into fresh power under the greatest of its early kings. Ine, the West-Saxon king whose reign covered the long period from 688 to 728, carried on during the whole of it the war which Centwine had begun. He pushed his way southward round the marshes of the Parret to a more fertile territory, and guarded the frontier of his new conquests by a wooden fort on the banks of the Tone which has grown into the present Taunton. The West-Saxons thus became masters of the whole district which now bears the name of Somerset. The conquest of Sussex and of Kent on his eastern border made Ine master of all Britain south of the Thames, and his repulse of a new Mercian King Ceolred in a bloody encounter at Wodnesburh in 714 seemed to establish the threefold division of the English race between three realms of almost equal power. But able as Ine was to hold Mercia at bay, he was unable to hush the civil strife that was the curse of Wessex, and a wild legend tells the story of the disgust which drove him from the world. He had feasted royally at one of his country houses, and on the morrow, as he rode from it, his queen bade him turn back thither. The king returned to find his house stripped of curtains and vessels, and foul with refuse and the

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dung of cattle, while in the royal bed where he had slept with Æthelburh rested a sow with her farrow of pigs. The scene had no need of the queen's comment: "See, my lord, how the fashion of this world passeth away!" In 726 he sought peace in a pilgrimage to Rome. The anarchy which had driven Ine from the throne broke out in civil strife which left Wessex an easy prey to Æthelbald, the successor of Ceolred in the Mercian realm. Æthelbald took up with better fortune the struggle of his people for supremacy over the south. He penetrated to the very heart of the West-Saxon kingdom, and his siege and capture of the royal town of Somerton in 733 ended the war. For twenty years the overlordship of Mercia was recognized by all Britain south of the Humber. It was at the head of the forces not of Mercia only but of East-Anglia, Kent, and Essex, as well as of the West-Saxons, that Æthelbald marched against the Welsh on his western border.

Bæda.

In so complete a mastery of the south the Mercian King found grounds for a hope that Northern Britain would also yield to his sway. But the dream of a single England was again destined to be foiled. Fallen as Northumbria was from its old glory, it still remained a great power. Under the peaceful reigns of Ecgfrith's successors, Aldfrith and Ceolwulf, their kingdom became the literary centre of Western Europe. No schools were more famous than those of Jarrow and York. The whole learning of the age seemed to be summed up in a Northumbrian scholar. Bæda—the Venerable Bede as later times styled him—was born about ten years after the Synod of Whitby beneath the shade of a great abbey which Benedict Biscop was rearing by the mouth of the Wear. His youth was trained and his long tranquil life was wholly spent in an offshoot of Benedict's house which was founded by his scholar Ceolfred. Bæda never stirred from Jarrow. "I spent my whole life in the same monastery," he says, "and while attentive to the rule of my order and the service of the Church, my constant pleasure lay in learning, or teaching, or writing." The

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words sketch for us a scholar's life, the more touching in its simplicity that it is the life of the first great English scholar. The quiet grandeur of a life consecrated to knowledge, the tranquil pleasure that lies in learning and teaching and writing, dawned for Englishmen in the story of Bæda. While still young he became a teacher, and six hundred monks besides strangers that flocked thither for instruction formed his school of Jarrow. It is hard to imagine how among the toils of the schoolmaster and the duties of the monk Bæda could have found time for the composition of the numerous works that made his name famous in the West. But materials for study had accumulated in Northumbria through the journeys of Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop and the libraries which were forming at Wearmouth and York. The tradition of the older Irish teachers still lingered to direct the young scholar into that path of Scriptural interpretation to which he chiefly owed his fame. Greek, a rare accomplishment in the West, came to him from the school which the Greek Archbishop Theodore founded beneath the walls of Canterbury. His skill in the ecclesiastical chant was derived from a Roman cantor whom Pope Vitalian sent in the train of Benedict Biscop. Little by little the young scholar thus made himself master of the whole range of the science of his time; he became, as Burke rightly styled him, "the father of English learning." The tradition of the older classic culture was first revived for England in his quotations of Plato and Aristotle, of Seneca and Cicero, of Lucretius and Ovid. Vergil cast over him the same spell that he cast over Dante; verses from the Æneid break his narratives of martyrdoms, and the disciple ventures on the track of the great master in a little eclogue descriptive of the approach of spring. His work was done with small aid from others. "I am my own secretary," he writes; "I make my own notes. I am my own librarian." But forty-five works remained after his death to attest his prodigious industry. In his own eyes and those of his contemporaries the most

CHAP. II. important among these were the commentaries and homilies upon various books of the Bible which he had drawn from the writings of the Fathers. But he was far from confining himself to theology. In treatises compiled as text-books for his scholars Bæda threw together all that the world had then accumulated in astronomy and meteorology, in physics and music, in philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, arithmetic, medicine. But the encyclopædic character of his researches left him in heart a simple Englishman. He loved his own English tongue, he was skilled in English song, his last work was a translation into English of the Gospel of St. John, and almost the last words that broke from his lips were some English rimes upon death.

But the noblest proof of his love of England lies in the work which immortalizes his name. In his "Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation," Bæda was at once the founder of mediæval history and the first English historian. All that we really know of the century and a half that follows the landing of Augustine we know from him. Wherever his own personal observation extended, the story is told with admirable detail and force. He is hardly less full or accurate in the portions which he owed to his Kentish friends, Alcwine and Nothelm. What he owed to no informant was his exquisite faculty of story-telling, and yet no story of his own telling is so touching as the story of his death. Two weeks before the Easter of 735 the old man was seized with an extreme weakness and loss of breath. He still preserved however his usual pleasantness and gay good-humour, and in spite of prolonged sleeplessness continued his lectures to the pupils about him. Verses of his own English tongue broke from time to time from the master's lip—rude rimes that told how before the "need-fare," Death's stern "must go," none can enough bethink him what is to be his doom for good or ill. The tears of Bæda's scholars mingled with his song. "We never read without weeping," writes one of them. So the days rolled on to Ascension-tide, and still master

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and pupils toiled at their work, for Bæda longed to bring to an end his version of St. John's Gospel into the English tongue and his extracts from Bishop Isidore. "I don't want my boys to read a lie," he answered those who would have had him rest, "or to work to no purpose after I am gone." A few days before Ascension-tide his sickness grew upon him, but he spent the whole day in teaching, only saying cheerfully to his scholars, "Learn with what speed you may; I know not how long I may last." The dawn broke on another sleepless night, and again the old man called his scholars round him and bade them write. "There is still a chapter wanting," said the scribe, as the morning drew on, "and it is hard for thee to question thyself any longer." "It is easily done," said Bæda; "take thy pen and write quickly." Amid tears and farewells the day wore on to eventide. "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master," said the boy. "Write it quickly," bade the dying man. "It is finished now," said the little scribe at last. "You speak truth," said the master; "all is finished now." Placed upon the pavement, his head supported in his scholar's arms, his face turned to the spot where he was wont to pray, Bæda chanted the solemn "Glory to God." As his voice reached the close of his song he passed quietly away.

First among English scholars, first among English theologians, first among English historians, it is in the monk of Jarrow that English literature strikes its roots. In the six hundred scholars who gathered round him for instruction he is the father of our national education. In his physical treatises he is the first figure to which our science looks back. But the quiet tenor of his scholar's life was broken by the growing anarchy of Northumbria, and by threats of war from its Mercian rival. At last Æthelbald marched on a state which seemed exhausted by civil discord and ready for submission to his arms. But its king Eadberht showed himself worthy of the kings that had gone before him, and in 740 he threw back Æthelbald's attack in

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a repulse which not only ruined the Mercian ruler's hopes of northern conquest but loosened his hold on the south. Already goaded to revolt by exactions, the West-Saxons were roused to a fresh struggle for independence, and after twelve years of continued outbreaks the whole people mustered at Burford under the golden dragon of their race. The fight was a desperate one, but a sudden panic seized the Mercian King. He fled from the field, and a decisive victory freed Wessex from the Mercian yoke. Four years later, in 757, its freedom was maintained by a new victory at Secandun; but amidst the rout of his host Æthelbald redeemed the one hour of shame that had tarnished his glory; he refused to fly, and fell fighting on the field.

Offa.

But though Eadberht might beat back the inroads of the Mercians and even conquer Strathclyde, before the anarchy of his own kingdom he could only fling down his sceptre and seek a refuge in the cloister of Lindisfarne. From the death of Bæda the history of Northumbria became in fact little more than a wild story of lawlessness and bloodshed. King after king was swept away by treason and revolt, the country fell into the hands of its turbulent nobles, its very fields lay waste, and the land was scourged by famine and plague. An anarchy almost as complete fell on Wessex after the recovery of its freedom. Only in Mid-England was there any sign of order and settled rule. The two crushing defeats at Burford and Secandun, though they had brought about revolts which stripped Mercia of all the conquests it had made, were far from having broken the Mercian power. Under the long reign of Offa, which went on from 755 to 796, it rose again to all but its old dominion. Since the dissolution of the temporary alliance which Penda formed with the Welsh King Cadwallon the war with the Britons in the west had been the one great hindrance to the progress of Mercia. But under Offa Mercia braced herself to the completion of her British conquests. Beating back the Welsh from Hereford,

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and carrying his own ravages into the heart of Wales, Offa in 779 drove the King of Powys from his capital, which changed its old name of Pengwern for the significant English title of the Town in the Scrub or Bush, Scrobbesbyryg, Shrewsbury. Experience however had taught the Mercians the worthlessness of raids like these and Offa resolved to create a military border by planting a settlement of Englishmen between the Severn, which had till then served as the western boundary of the English race, and the huge "Offa's Dyke" which he drew from the mouth of Wye to that of Dee. Here, as in the later conquests of the West-Saxons, the old plan of extermination was definitely abandoned and the Welsh who chose to remain dwelled undisturbed among their English conquerors. From these conquests over the Britons Offa turned to build up again the realm which had been shattered at Secandun. But his progress was slow. A reconquest of Kent in 774 woke anew the jealousy of the West-Saxons; and though Offa repulsed their attack at Bensington in 777 the victory was followed by several years of inaction. It was not till Wessex was again weakened by fresh anarchy that he was able to seize East Anglia and restore his realm to its old bounds under Wulfhere. Further he could not go. A Kentish revolt occupied him till his death in 796, and his successor Cenwulf did little but preserve the realm he bequeathed him. At the close of the eighth century the drift of the English peoples towards a national unity was in fact utterly arrested. The work of Northumbria had been foiled by the resistance of Mercia; the effort of Mercia had broken down before the resistance of Wessex. A threefold division seemed to have stamped itself upon the land; and so complete was the balance of power between the three realms which parted it that no subjection of one to the other seemed likely to fuse the English tribes into an English people.

CHAPTER III.

WESSEX AND THE NORTHMEN.

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THE union which each English kingdom in turn had failed to bring about was brought about by the pressure of the Northmen. The dwellers in the isles of the Baltic or on either side of the Scandinavian peninsula had lain hidden till now from Western Christendom, waging their battle for existence with a stern climate, a barren soil, and stormy seas. It was this hard fight for life that left its stamp on the temper of Dane, Swede, or Norwegian alike, that gave them their defiant energy, their ruthless daring, their passion for freedom and hatred of settled rule. Forays and plunder raids over sea eked out their scanty livelihood, and at the close of the eighth century these raids found a wider sphere than the waters of the northern seas. Tidings of the wealth garnered in the abbeys and towns of the new Christendom which had risen from the wreck of Rome drew the pirates slowly southwards to the coasts of Northern Gaul; and just before Offa's death their boats touched the shores of Britain. To men of that day it must have seemed as though the world had gone back three hundred years. The same northern fiords poured forth their pirate-fleets as in the days of Hengest or Cerdic. There was the same wild panic as the black boats of the invaders struck inland along the river-reaches or moored round the river isles, the same sights of horror, firing of homesteads, slaughter of men, women driven off to

slavery or shame, children tossed on pikes or sold in the market-place, as when the English themselves had attacked Britain. Christian priests were again slain at the altar by worshippers of Woden; letters, arts, religion, government disappeared before these Northmen as before the Northmen of three centuries before.

In 794 a pirate band plundered the monasteries of Jarrow and Holy Island, and the presence of the freebooters soon told on the political balance of the English realms. A great revolution was going on in the south, where Mercia was torn by civil wars which followed on Cenwulf's death while the civil strife of the West-Saxons was hushed by a new king, Egberht. In Offa's days Egberht had failed in his claim of the crown of Wessex and had been driven to fly for refuge to the court of the Franks. He remained there through the memorable year during which Charles the Great restored the Empire of the West, and returned in 802 to be quietly welcomed as King by the West-Saxon people. A march into the heart of Cornwall and the conquest of this last fragment of the British kingdom in the south-west freed his hands for a strife with Mercia which broke out in 825 when the Mercian King Beornwulf marched into the heart of Wiltshire. A victory of Egberht at Ellandun gave all England south of Thames to the West-Saxons and the defeat of Beornwulf spurred the men of East-Anglia to rise in a desperate revolt against Mercia. Two great overthrows at their hands had already spent its strength when Egberht crossed the Thames in 827, and the realm of Penda and Offa bowed without a struggle to its conqueror. But Egberht had wider aims than those of supremacy over Mercia alone. The dream of a union of all England drew him to the north. Northumbria was still strong; in learning and arts it stood at the head of the English race; and under a king like Eadberht it would have withstood Egberht as resolutely as it had withstood Æthelbald. But the ruin of Jarrow and Holy Island had cast on it a spell of terror. Torn by civil

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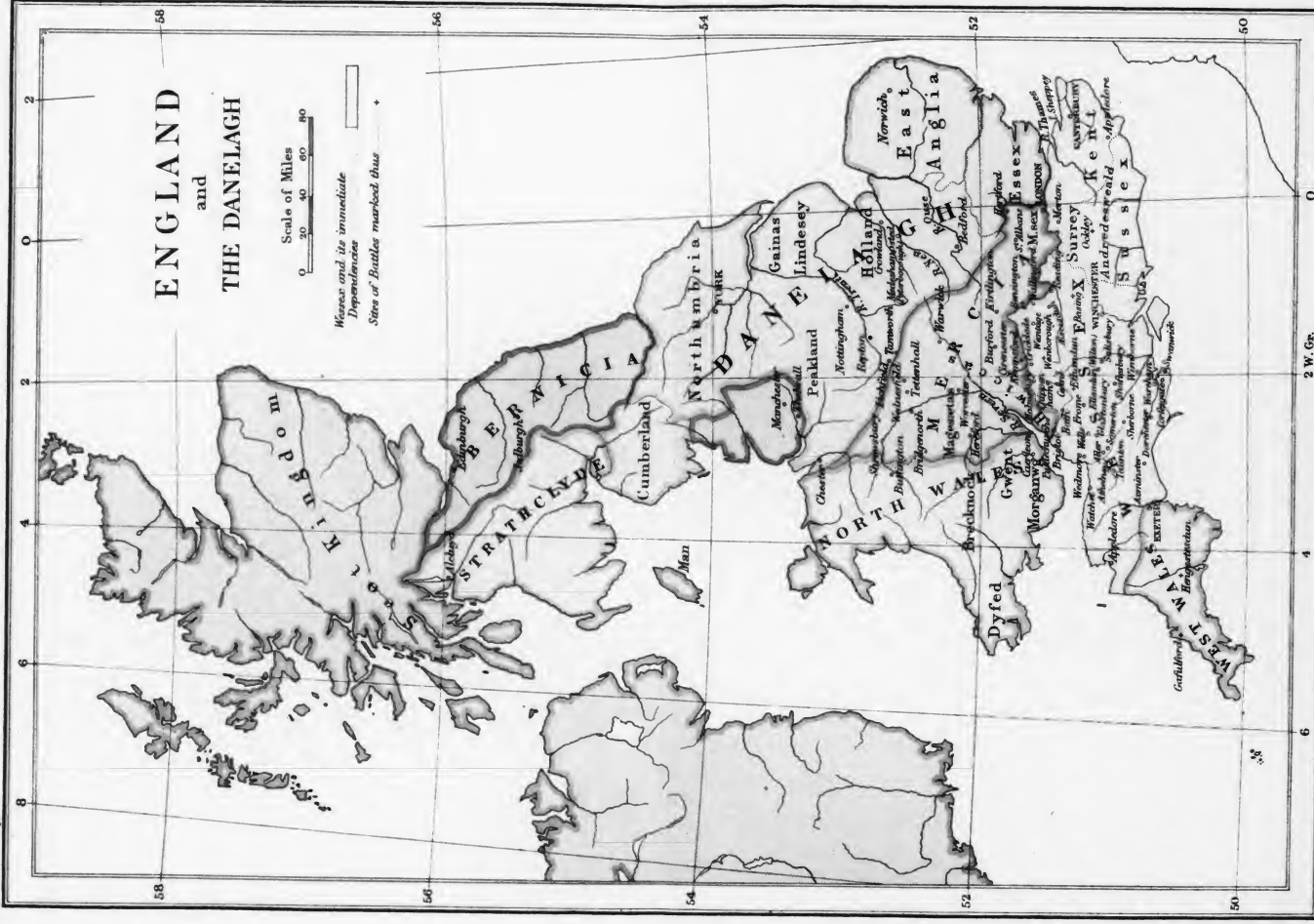
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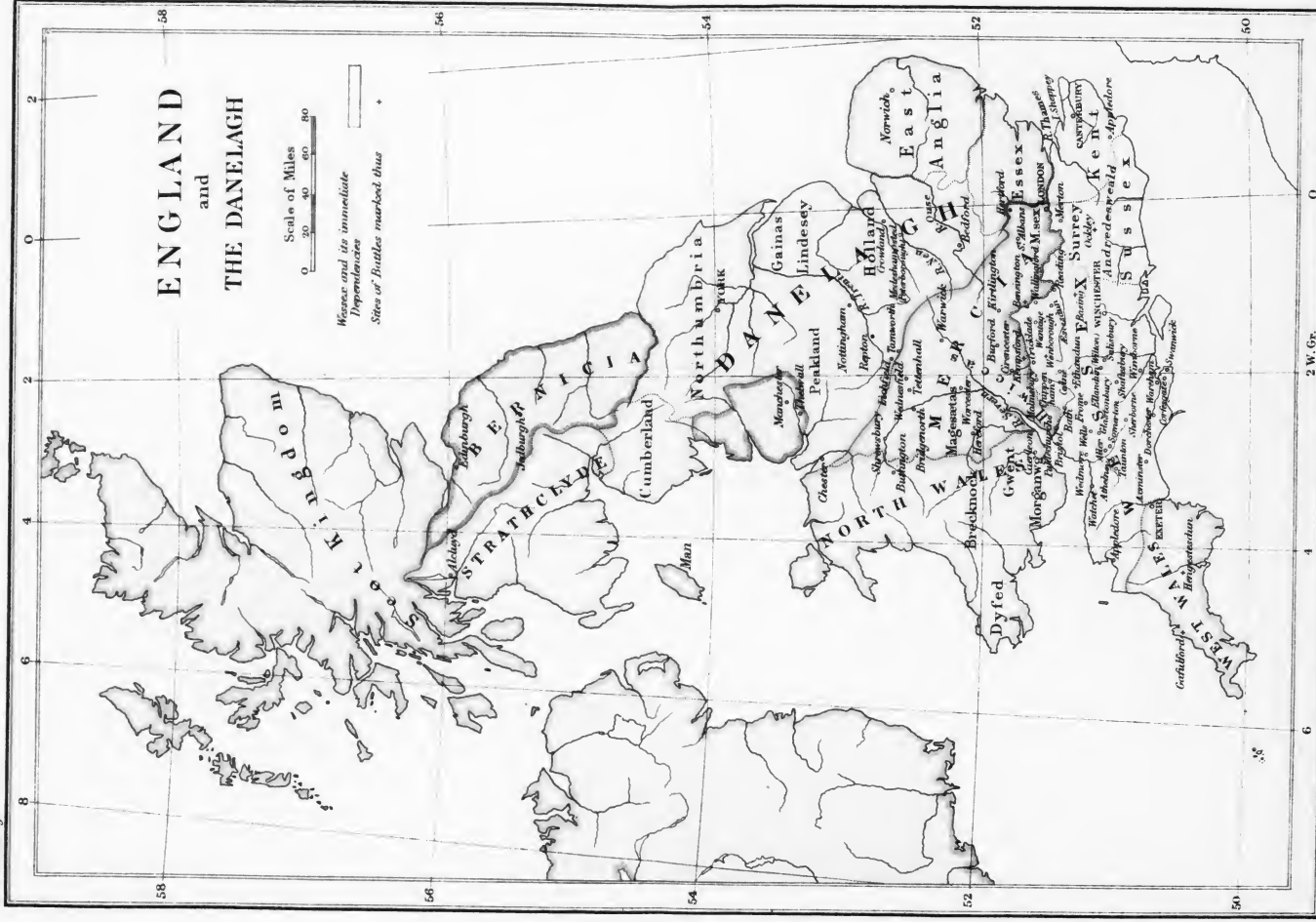
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strife, and desperate of finding in itself the union needed to meet the Northmen, Northumbria sought union and deliverance in subjection to a foreign master. Its thegns met Egberht in Derbyshire, and owned the supremacy of Wessex.

With the submission of Northumbria the work which Oswiu and Æthelbald had failed to do was done, and the whole English race was for the first time knit together under a single rule. The union came not a moment too soon. Had the old severance of people from people, the old civil strife within each separate realm gone on it is hard to see how the attacks of the Northmen could have been withstood. They were already settled in Ireland; and from Ireland a northern host landed in 836 at Charmouth in Dorsetshire strong enough to drive Egberht, when he hastened to meet them, from the field. His victory the year after at Hengestdun won a little rest for the land; but Æthelwulf who mounted the throne on Egberht's death in 839 had to face an attack which was only beaten off by years of hard fighting. Æthelwulf fought bravely in defence of his realm; in his defeat at Charmouth as in a final victory at Aclea in 851 he led his troops in person against the sea-robbers; and his success won peace for the land through the short and uneventful reigns of his sons Æthelbald and Æthelberht. But the northern storm burst in full force upon England when a third son, Æthelred, followed his brothers on the throne. The Northmen were now settled on the coast of Ireland and the coast of Gaul; they were masters of the sea; and from west and east alike they closed upon Britain. While one host from Ireland fell on the Scot kingdom north of the Firth of Forth, another from Scandinavia landed in 866 on the coast of East Anglia under Hubba and marched the next year upon York. A victory over two claimants of its crown gave the pirates Northumbria; and their two armies united at Nottingham in 868 for an attack on the Mercian realm, Mercia was saved by a march of King Æthelred to Not-





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tingham, but the peace he made there with the Northmen left them leisure to prepare for an invasion of East-Anglia, whose under-King, Eadmund, brought prisoner before their leaders, was bound to a tree and shot to death with arrows. His martyrdom by the heathen made Eadmund the St. Sebastian of English legend; in later days his figure gleamed from the pictured windows of every church along the eastern coast, and the stately Abbey of St. Edmundsbury rose over his relics. With him ended the line of East-Anglian under-kings, for his kingdom was not only conquered but divided among the soldiers of the pirate host, and their leader Guthrum assumed its crown. Then the Northmen turned to the richer spoil of the great abbeys of the Fen. Peterborough, Crowland, Ely went up in flames, and their monks fled or were slain among the ruins. Mercia, though still spared from actual conquest, cowered panic-stricken before the Northmen, and by payment of tribute owned them as its overlords.

In five years the work of Ecgbert had been undone, and England north of the Thames had been torn from the overlordship of Wessex. So rapid a change could only have been made possible by the temper of the conquered kingdoms. To them the conquest was simply their transfer from one overlord to another, and it may be that in all there were men who preferred the overlordship of the Northman to the overlordship of the West-Saxon. But the loss of the subject kingdoms left Wessex face to face with the invaders. The time had now come for it to fight, not for supremacy, but for life. As yet the land seemed paralyzed by terror. With the exception of his one march on Nottingham, King Æthelred had done nothing to save his under-kingdoms from the wreck. But the pirates no sooner pushed up Thames to Reading in 871 than the West-Saxons, attacked on their own soil, turned fiercely at bay. A desperate attack drove the Northmen from Ashdown on the heights that overlooked the Vale of White Horse, but their camp in the tongue of land between the

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the Peace of Wedmore seemed a surrender of the bulk of Britain to its invaders. All Northumbria, all East-Anglia, all Central England east of a line which stretched from Thames' mouth along the Lea to Bedford, thence along the Ouse to Watling Street, and by Watling Street to Chester, was left subject to the Northmen. Throughout this 'Danelagh'—as it was called—the conquerors settled down among the conquered population as lords of the soil, thickly in Northern Britain, more thinly in its central districts, but everywhere guarding jealously their old isolation and gathering in separate 'heres' or armies round towns which were only linked in loose confederacies. The peace had in fact saved little more than Wessex itself. But in saving Wessex it saved England. The spell of terror was broken. The tide of invasion turned. From an attitude of attack the Northmen were thrown back on an attitude of defence. The whole reign of Ælfred was a preparation for a fresh struggle that was to wrest back from the pirates the land they had won.

What really gave England heart for such a struggle was the courage and energy of the King himself. Ælfred was the noblest as he was the most complete embodiment of all that is great, all that is loveable, in the English temper. He combined as no other man has ever combined its practical energy, its patient and enduring force, its profound sense of duty, the reserve and self-control that steadies in it a wide outlook and a restless daring, its temperance and fairness, its frank geniality, its sensitiveness to affection, its poetic tenderness, its deep and passionate religion. Religion indeed was the groundwork of Ælfred's character. His temper was instinct with piety. Everywhere throughout his writings that remain to us the name of God, the thought of God, stir him to outbursts of ecstatic adoration. But he was no mere saint. He felt none of that scorn of the world about him which drove the nobler souls of his day to monastery or hermitage. Vexed as he was by sickness and constant

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 Wessex and the Northmen. geniality, a peculiar elasticity and mobility of nature, gave
 796- colour and charm to his life. A sunny frankness and
 947. openness of spirit breathes in the pleasant chat of his
 books, and what he was in his books he showed himself in
 his daily converse. Ælfred was in truth an artist, and
 both the lights and shadows of his life were those of the
 artistic temperament. His love of books, his love of
 strangers, his questionings of travellers and scholars, betray
 an imaginative restlessness that longs to break out of the
 narrow world of experience which hemmed him in. At
 one time he jots down news of a voyage to the unknown
 seas of the north. At another he listens to tidings which
 his envoys bring back from the churches of Malabar.
 And side by side with this restless outlook of the artistic
 nature he showed its tenderness and susceptibility, its
 vivid apprehension of unseen danger, its craving for affec-
 tion, its sensitiveness to wrong. It was with himself rather
 than with his reader that he communed as thoughts of the
 foe without, of ingratitude and opposition within, broke
 the calm pages of Gregory or Boethius. "Oh, what a
 happy man was he," he cries once, "that man that had a
 naked sword hanging over his head from a single thread;
 so as to me it always did!" "Desirest thou power?" he
 asks at another time. "But thou shalt never obtain it
 without sorrows—sorrows from strange folk, and yet
 keener sorrows from thine own kindred." "Hardship and
 sorrow!" he breaks out again, "not a king but would
 wish to be without these if he could. But I know that he
 cannot!" The loneliness which breathes in words like
 these has often begotten in great rulers a cynical contempt
 of men and the judgements of men. But cynicism found
 no echo in the large and sympathetic temper of Ælfred.
 He not only longed for the love of his subjects, but for
 the remembrance of "generations" to come. Nor did his
 inner gloom or anxiety check for an instant his vivid and
 versatile activity. To the scholars he gathered round him

he seemed the very type of a scholar, snatching every hour
 he could find to read or listen to books read to him. The
 singers of his court found in him a brother singer, gathering
 the old songs of his people to teach them to his children,
 breaking his renderings from the Latin with simple verse,
 solacing himself in hours of depression with the music of
 the Psalms. He passed from court and study to plan
 buildings and instruct craftsmen in gold-work, to teach
 even falconers and dog-keepers their business. But all this
 versatility and ingenuity was controlled by a cool good
 sense. Ælfred was a thorough man of business. He was
 careful of detail, laborious, methodical. He carried in his
 bosom a little handbook in which he noted things as they
 struck him—now a bit of family genealogy, now a prayer,
 now such a story as that of Ealdhelm playing minstrel on
 the bridge. Each hour of the day had its appointed task;
 there was the same order in the division of his revenue and
 in the arrangement of his court.

Wide however and various as was the King's temper,
 its range was less wonderful than its harmony. Of the
 narrowness, of the want of proportion, of the predominance
 of one quality over another which goes commonly with an
 intensity of moral purpose Ælfred showed not a trace.
 Scholar and soldier, artist and man of business, poet and
 saint, his character kept that perfect balance which charms
 us in no other Englishman save Shakspeare. But full
 and harmonious as his temper was, it was the temper of a
 king. Every power was bent to the work of rule. His
 practical energy found scope for itself in the material and
 administrative restoration of the wasted land. His intel-
 lectual activity breathed fresh life into education and
 literature. His capacity for inspiring trust and affection
 drew the hearts of Englishmen to a common centre, and
 began the upbuilding of a new England. And all was
 guided, controlled, ennobled by a single aim. "So long as
 I have lived," said the King as life closed about him, "I
 have striven to live worthily." Little by little men came

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to know what such a life of worthiness meant. Little by little they came to recognize in Ælfred a ruler of higher and nobler stamp than the world had seen. Never had it seen a King who lived solely for the good of his people. Never had it seen a ruler who set aside every personal aim to devote himself solely to the welfare of those whom he ruled. It was this grand self-mastery that gave him his power over the men about him. Warrior and conqueror as he was, they saw him set aside at thirty the warrior's dream of conquest; and the self-renouncement of Wedmore struck the key-note of his reign. But still more is it this height and singleness of purpose, this absolute concentration of the noblest faculties to the noblest aim, that lifts Ælfred out of the narrow bounds of Wessex. If the sphere of his action seems too small to justify the comparison of him with the few whom the world owns as its greatest men, he rises to their level in the moral grandeur of his life. And it is this which has hallowed his memory among his own English people. "I desire," said the King in some of his latest words, "I desire to leave to the men that come after me a remembrance of me in good works." His aim has been more than fulfilled. His memory has come down to us with a living distinctness through the mists of exaggeration and legend which time gathered round it. The instinct of the people has clung to him with a singular affection. The love which he won a thousand years ago has lingered round his name from that day to this. While every other name of those earlier times has all but faded from the recollection of Englishmen, that of Ælfred remains familiar to every English child.

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The secret of Ælfred's government lay in his own vivid energy. He could hardly have chosen braver or more active helpers than those whom he employed both in his political and in his educational efforts. The children whom he trained to rule proved the ablest rulers of their time. But at the outset of his reign he stood alone, and what work was to be done was done by the King himself.

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His first efforts were directed to the material restoration of his realm. The burnt and wasted country saw its towns built again, forts erected in positions of danger, new abbeys founded, the machinery of justice and government restored, the laws codified and amended. Still more strenuous were Ælfred's efforts for its moral and intellectual restoration. Even in Mercia and Northumbria the pirates' sword had left few survivors of the schools of Ecgberht or Bæda, and matters were even worse in Wessex which had been as yet the most ignorant of the English kingdoms. "When I began to reign," said Ælfred, "I cannot remember one priest south of the Thames who could render his service-book into English." For instructors indeed he could find only a few Mercian prelates and priests with one Welsh bishop, Asser. "Formerly," the King writes bitterly, "men came hither from foreign lands to seek for instruction, and now when we desire it we can only obtain it from abroad." But his mind was far from being prisoned within his own island. He sent a Norwegian ship-master to explore the White Sea, and Wulfstan to trace the coast of Esthonia; envoys bore his presents to the churches of India and Jerusalem, and an annual mission carried Peter's-pence to Rome. But it was with the Franks that his intercourse was closest, and it was from them that he drew the scholars to aid him in his work of education. A scholar named Grimbald came from St. Omer to preside over his new abbey at Winchester; and John, the old Saxon, was fetched from the abbey of Corbey to rule a monastery and school that Ælfred's gratitude for his deliverance from the Danes raised in the marshes of Athelney. The real work however to be done was done, not by these teachers but by the King himself. Ælfred established a school for the young nobles in his court, and it was to the need of books for these scholars in their own tongue that we owe his most remarkable literary effort. He took his books as he found them—they were the popular manuals of his age—the Consolation of Boethius, the Pastoral of Pope Gregory,

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the compilation of Orosius, then the one accessible handbook of universal history, and the history of his own people by Bæda. He translated these works into English, but he was far more than a translator, he was an editor for the people. Here he omitted, there he expanded. He enriched Orosius by a sketch of the new geographical discoveries in the North. He gave a West-Saxon form to his selections from Bæda. In one place he stops to explain his theory of government, his wish for a thicker population, his conception of national welfare as consisting in a due balance of priest, soldier, and churl. The mention of Nero spurs him to an outbreak on the abuses of power. The cold Providence of Boethius gives way to an enthusiastic acknowledgement of the goodness of God. As he writes, his large-hearted nature flings off its royal mantle, and he talks as a man to men. "Do not blame me," he prays with a charming simplicity, "if any know Latin better than I, for every man must say what he says and do what he does according to his ability." But simple as was his aim, Ælfred changed the whole front of our literature. Before him, England possessed in her own tongue one great poem and a train of ballads and battle-songs. Prose she had none. The mighty roll of the prose books that fill her libraries begins with the translations of Ælfred, and above all with the chronicle of his reign. It seems likely that the King's rendering of Bæda's history gave the first impulse towards the compilation of what is known as the English or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was certainly thrown into its present form during his reign. The meagre lists of the Kings of Wessex and the bishops of Winchester, which had been preserved from older times, were roughly expanded into a national history by insertions from Bæda: but it is when it reaches the reign of Ælfred that the chronicle suddenly widens into the vigorous narrative, full of life and originality, that marks the gift of a new power to the English tongue. Varying as it does from age to age in historic value, it remains the first

vernacular history of any Teutonic people, and save for the Gothic translations of Ulfilas, the earliest and most venerable monument of Teutonic prose.

But all this literary activity was only a part of that general upbuilding of Wessex by which Ælfred was preparing for a fresh contest with the stranger. He knew that the actual winning back of the Danelagh must be a work of the sword, and through these long years of peace he was busy with the creation of such a force as might match that of the Northmen. A fleet grew out of the little squadron which Ælfred had been forced to man with Frisian seamen. The national fyrd or levy of all freemen at the King's call was reorganized. It was now divided into two halves, one of which served in the field while the other guarded its own burhs and townships and served to relieve its fellow when the men's forty days of service were ended. A more disciplined military force was provided by subjecting all owners of five hides of land to thegn-service, a step which recognized the change that had now substituted the thegn for the eorl and in which we see the beginning of a feudal system. How effective these measures were was seen when the new resistance they met on the Continent drove the Northmen to a fresh attack on Britain. In 893 a large fleet steered for the Andredsweald, while the sea-king Hasting entered the Thames. Ælfred held both at bay through the year till the men of the Danelagh rose at their comrades' call. Wessex stood again front to front with the Northmen. But the King's measures had made the realm strong enough to set aside its old policy of defence for one of vigorous attack. His son Eadward and his son-in-law Æthelred, whom he had set as Ealdorman over what remained of Mercia, showed themselves as skilful and active as the King. The aim of the Northmen was to rouse again the hostility of the Welsh, but while Ælfred held Exeter against their fleet Eadward and Æthelred caught their army near the Severn and overthrew it with a vast slaughter at

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Buttington. The destruction of their camp on the Lea by the united English forces ended the war; in 897 Hasting again withdrew across the Channel, and the Danelagh made peace. It was with the peace he had won still about him that Ælfred died in 901, and warrior as his son Eadward had shown himself, he clung to his father's policy of rest. It was not till 910 that a fresh rising of the Northmen forced Ælfred's children to gird themselves to the conquest of the Danelagh.

While Eadward bridled East-Anglia his sister Æthelflæd, in whose hands Æthelred's death left English Mercia, attacked the "Five Boroughs," a rude confederacy which had taken the place of the older Mercian kingdom. Derby represented the original Mercia on the upper Trent, Lincoln the Lindiswaras, Leicester the Middle-English, Stamford the province of the Gyrwas, Nottingham probably that of the Southumbrians. Each of these "Five Boroughs" seems to have been ruled by its earl with his separate "host;" within each twelve "lawmen" administered Danish law, while a common justice-court existed for the whole confederacy. In her attack on this powerful league Æthelflæd abandoned the older strategy of battle and raid for that of siege and fortress-building. Advancing along the line of Trent, she fortified Tamworth and Stafford on its head-waters; when a rising in Gwent called her back to the Welsh border, her army stormed Brecknock; and its king no sooner fled for shelter to the Northmen in whose aid he had risen than Æthelflæd at once closed on Derby. Raids from Middle-England failed to draw the Lady of Mercia from her prey; and Derby was hardly her own when, turning southward, she forced the surrender of Leicester. The brilliancy of his sister's exploits had as yet eclipsed those of the King, but the son of Ælfred was a vigorous and active ruler; he had repulsed a dangerous inroad of the Northmen from France, summoned no doubt by the cry of distress from their brethren in England, and had bridled East-Anglia to the south by the erection of

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forts at Hertford and Witham. On the death of Æthelflæd in 918 he came boldly to the front. Annexing Mercia to Wessex, and thus gathering the whole strength of the kingdom into his single hand, he undertook the systematic reduction of the Danelagh. South of the Middle-English and the Fens lay a tract watered by the Ouse and the Nen—originally the district of a tribe known as the South-English, and now, like the Five Boroughs of the north, grouped round the towns of Bedford, Huntingdon, and Northampton. The reduction of these was followed by that of East-Anglia; the Northmen of the Fens submitted with Stamford, the Southumbrians with Nottingham. Eadward's Mercian troops had already seized Manchester; he himself was preparing to complete his conquests, when in 924 the whole of the North suddenly laid itself at his feet. Not merely Northumbria but the Scots and the Britons of Strathclyde "chose him to father and lord."

The triumph was his last. Eadward died in 925, but the reign of his son Æthelstan, Ælfred's golden-haired grandson whom the King had girded as a child with a sword set in a golden scabbard and a gem-studded belt, proved even more glorious than his own. In spite of its submission the North had still to be won. Dread of the Northmen had drawn Scot and Cumbrian to their acknowledgement of Eadward's overlordship, but Æthelstan no sooner incorporated Northumbria with his dominions than dread of Wessex took the place of dread of the Danelagh. The Scot King Constantine organized a league of Scot, Cumbrian, and Welshman with the Northmen. The league was broken by Æthelstan's rapid action in 926; the North-Welsh were forced to pay annual tribute, to march in his armies, and to attend his councils; the West-Welsh of Cornwall were reduced to a like vassalage, and finally driven from Exeter, which they had shared till then with its English inhabitants. But ten years later the same league called Æthelstan again to the North; and though Constantine was punished by an army which wasted his

CHAP. III. kingdom while a fleet ravaged its coasts to Caithness the English army had no sooner withdrawn than Northumbria rose in 937 at the appearance of a fleet of pirates from Ireland under the sea-king Anlaf in the Humber. Scot and Cumbrian fought beside the Northmen against the West-Saxon King; but his victory at Brunanburh crushed the confederacy and won peace till his death. His son Eadmund was but a boy at his accession in 940, and the North again rose in revolt. The men of the Five Boroughs joined their kinsmen in Northumbria; once Eadmund was driven to a peace which left him King but south of the Watling Street; and only years of hard fighting again laid the Danelagh at his feet.

Dunstan. But policy was now to supplement the work of the sword. The completion of the West-Saxon realm was in fact reserved for the hands, not of a king or warrior, but of a priest. Dunstan stands first in the line of ecclesiastical statesmen who counted among them Lanfranc and Wolsey and ended in Laud. He is still more remarkable in himself, in his own vivid personality after eight centuries of revolution and change. He was born in the little hamlet of Glastonbury, the home of his father, Heorstan, a man of wealth and brother of the bishops of Wells and of Winchester. It must have been in his father's hall that the fair, diminutive boy, with his scant but beautiful hair, caught his love for "the vain songs of heathendom, the trifling legends, the funeral chaunts," which afterwards roused against him the charge of sorcery. Thence too he might have derived his passionate love of music, and his custom of carrying his harp in hand on journey or visit. Wandering scholars of Ireland had left their books in the monastery of Glastonbury, as they left them along the Rhine and the Danube; and Dunstan plunged into the study of sacred and profane letters till his brain broke down in delirium. So famous became his knowledge in the neighbourhood that news of it reached the court of Æthelstan, but his appearance there was the signal for

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a burst of ill-will among the courtiers. They drove him from the king's train, threw him from his horse as he passed through the marshes, and with the wild passion of their age trampled him under foot in the mire. The outrage ended in fever, and Dunstan rose from his sick-bed a monk. But the monastic profession was then little more than a vow of celibacy and his devotion took no ascetic turn. His nature in fact was sunny, versatile, artistic; full of strong affections, and capable of inspiring others with affections as strong. Quick-witted, of tenacious memory, a ready and fluent speaker, gay and genial in address, an artist, a musician, he was at the same time an indefatigable worker at books, at building, at handicraft. As his sphere began to widen we see him followed by a train of pupils, busy with literature, writing, harping, painting, designing. One morning a lady summons him to her house to design a robe which she is embroidering, and as he bends with her maidens over their toil his harp hung upon the wall sounds without mortal touch tones which the excited ears around frame into a joyous antiphon.

From this scholar-life Dunstan was called to a wider sphere of activity by the accession of Eadmund. But the old jealousies revived at his reappearance at court, and counting the game lost Dunstan prepared again to withdraw. The King had spent the day in the chase; the red deer which he was pursuing dashed over Cheddar cliffs, and his horse only checked itself on the brink of the ravine at the moment when Eadmund in the bitterness of death was repenting of his injustice to Dunstan. He was at once summoned on the King's return. "Saddle your horse," said Eadmund, "and ride with me." The royal train swept over the marshes to his home; and the King, bestowing on him the kiss of peace, seated him in the abbot's chair as Abbot of Glastonbury. Dunstan became one of Eadmund's councillors and his hand was seen in the settlement of the North. It was the hostility of the states around it to the West-Saxon rule which had roused so

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often revolt in the Danelagh; but from this time we hear nothing more of the hostility of Bernicia, while Strathclyde was conquered by Eadmund and turned adroitly to account in winning over the Scots to his cause. The greater part of it was granted to their King Malcolm on terms that he should be Eadmund's fellow-worker by sea and land. The league of Scot and Briton was thus finally broken up, and the fidelity of the Scots secured by their need of help in holding down their former ally. The settlement was soon troubled by the young King's death. As he feasted at Pucklechurch in the May of 946, Leofa, a robber whom Eadmund had banished from the land, entered the hall, seated himself at the royal board, and drew sword on the cup-bearer when he bade him retire. The King sprang in wrath to his thegn's aid, and seizing Leofa by the hair, flung him to the ground; but in the struggle the robber drove his dagger to Eadmund's heart. His death at once stirred fresh troubles in the North; the Danelagh rose against his brother and successor, Eadred, and some years of hard fighting were needed before it was again driven to own the English supremacy. But with its submission in 954 the work of conquest was done. Dogged as his fight had been, the Northman at last owned himself beaten. From the moment of Eadred's final triumph all resistance came to an end. The Danelagh ceased to be a force in English politics. North might part anew from South; men of Yorkshire might again cross swords with men of Hampshire; but their strife was henceforth a local strife between men of the same people: it was a strife of Englishmen with Englishmen, and not of Englishmen with Northmen.

CHAPTER IV.

FEUDALISM AND THE MONARCHY.

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THE fierceness of the Northman's onset had hidden the real character of his attack. To the men who first fronted the pirates it seemed as though the story of the world had gone back to the days when the German barbarians first broke in upon the civilized world. It was so above all in Britain. All that tradition told of the Englishmen's own attack on the island was seen in the Northmen's attack on it. Boats of marauders from the northern seas again swarmed off the British coast; church and town were again the special object of attack; the invaders again settled on the conquered soil; heathendom again proved stronger than the faith of Christ. But the issues of the two attacks showed the mighty difference between them. When the English ceased from their onset upon Roman Britain Roman Britain had disappeared, and a new people of conquerors stood alone on the conquered land. The Northern storm on the other hand left land, people, government unchanged. England remained a country of Englishmen. The conquerors sank into the mass of the conquered, and Woden yielded without a struggle to Christ. The strife between Briton and Englishman was in fact a strife between men of different races, while the strife between Northman and Englishman was a strife between men whose race was the same. The followers of Hengest or of Ida were men

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utterly alien from the life of Britain, strange to its arts, its culture, its wealth, as they were strange to the social degradation which Rome had brought on its province. But the Northman was little more than an Englishman bringing back to an England which had drifted far from its origin the barbaric life of its earliest forefathers. Nowhere throughout Europe was the fight so fierce, because nowhere else were the fighters men of one blood and one speech. But just for this reason the union of the combatants was nowhere so peaceful or so complete. The victory of the house of Ælfred only hastened a process of fusion which was already going on. From the first moment of his settlement in the Danelagh the Northman had been passing into an Englishman. The settlers were few; they were scattered among a large population; in tongue, in manner, in institutions there was little to distinguish them from the men among whom they dwelt. Moreover their national temper helped on the process of assimilation. Even in France, where difference of language and difference of custom seemed to interpose an impassable barrier between the Northman settled in Normandy and his neighbours, he was fast becoming a Frenchman. In England, where no such barriers existed, the assimilation was even quicker. The two peoples soon became confounded. In a few years a Northman in blood was Archbishop of Canterbury and another Northman in blood was Archbishop of York.

*The three
Northern
Kingdoms.*

The fusion might have been delayed if not wholly averted by continued descents from the Scandinavian homeland. But with Eadred's reign the long attack which the Northman had directed against western Christendom came, for a while at least, to an end. On the world which it assailed its results had been immense. It had utterly changed the face of the west. The empire of Egberht, the empire of Charles the Great, had been alike dashed to pieces. But break and change as it might, Christendom had held the Northmen at bay. The Scandinavian power which had

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grown up on the western seas had disappeared like a dream. In Ireland the Northman's rule had dwindled to the holding of a few coast towns. In France his settlements had shrunk to the one settlement of Normandy. In England every Northman was a subject of the English King. Even the Empire of the Seas had passed from the Sea-Kings' hands. It was an English and not a Scandinavian fleet that for fifty years to come held mastery in the English and the Irish Channels. With Eadred's victory in fact the struggle seemed to have reached its close. Stray pirate boats still hung off headland and coast; stray vikings still shoved out in spring-tide to gather booty. But for nearly half-a-century to come no great pirate fleet made its way to the west, or landed on the shores of Britain. The energies of the Northmen were in fact absorbed through these years in the political changes of Scandinavia itself. The old isolation of fiord from fiord and dale from dale was breaking down. The little commonwealths which had held so jealously aloof from each other were being drawn together whether they would or no. In each of the three regions of the north great kingdoms were growing up. In Sweden King Eric made himself lord of the petty states about him. In Denmark King Gorm built up in the same way a monarchy of the Danes. Norway, though it lingered long, followed at last in the same track. Legend told how one of its many rulers, Harald of Westfold, sent his men to bring him Gytha of Hordaland, a girl he had chosen for wife, and how Gytha sent his men back again with taunts at his petty realm. The taunts went home, and Harald vowed never to clip or comb his hair till he had made all Norway his own. So every springtide came war and host- ing, harrying and burning, till a great fight at Hafursfiord settled the matter, and Harald "Ugly-Head" as men called him while the strife lasted was free to shear his locks again and became Harald "Fair-Hair." The Northmen loved no master, and a great multitude fled out of the country, some pushing as far as Iceland and colonizing it, some swarming

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to the Orkneys and Hebrides till Harald harried them out again and the sea-kings sailed southward to join Guthrum's host in the Rhine country or follow Rolf to his fights on the Seine. But little by little the land settled down into order, and the three Scandinavian realms gathered strength for new efforts which were to leave their mark on our after history.

But of the new danger which threatened it in this union of the north England knew little. The storm seemed to have drifted utterly away; and the land passed from a hundred years of ceaseless conflict into a time of peace. Here as elsewhere the Northman had failed in his purpose of conquest; but here as elsewhere he had done a mighty work. In shattering the empire of Charles the Great he had given birth to the nations of modern Europe. In his long strife with Englishmen he had created an English people. The national union which had been brought about for a moment by the sword of Egberht was a union of sheer force which broke down at the first blow of the sea-robbers. The black boats of the Northmen were so many wedges that split up the fabric of the roughly-built realm. But the very agency which destroyed the new England was destined to bring it back again, and to breathe into it a life that made its union real. The peoples who had so long looked on each other as enemies found themselves fronted by a common foe. They were thrown together by a common danger and the need of a common defence. Their common faith grew into a national bond as religion struggled hand in hand with England itself against the heathen of the north. They recognized a common king as a common struggle changed Ælfred and his sons from mere leaders of West Saxons into leaders of all Englishmen in their fight with the stranger. And when the work which Ælfred set his house to do was done, when the yoke of the Northman was lifted from the last of his conquests, Engle and Saxon, Northumbrian and Mercian, spent with the battle for a common freedom and a common country,

knew themselves in the hour of their deliverance as an English people.

The new people found its centre in the King. The heightening of the royal power was a direct outcome of the war. The dying out of other royal stocks left the house of Cerdic the one line of hereditary kingship. But it was the war with the Northmen that raised Ælfred and his sons from tribal leaders into national kings. The long series of triumphs which wrested the land from the stranger begot a new and universal loyalty; while the wider dominion which their success bequeathed removed the kings further and further from their people, lifted them higher and higher above the nobles, and clothed them more and more with a mysterious dignity. Above all the religious character of the war against the Northmen gave a religious character to the sovereigns who waged it. The king, if he was no longer sacred as the son of Woden, became yet more sacred as "the Lord's Anointed." By the very fact of his consecration he was pledged to a religious rule, to justice, mercy, and good government; but his "hallowing" invested him also with a power drawn not from the will of man or the assent of his subjects but from the will of God, and treason against him became the worst of crimes. Every reign lifted the sovereign higher in the social scale. The bishop, once ranked equal with him in value of life, sank to the level of the ealdorman. The ealdorman himself, once the hereditary ruler of a smaller state, became a mere delegate of the national king, with an authority curtailed in every shire by that of the royal shire-reeves, officers despatched to levy the royal revenues and to administer the royal justice. Among the later nobility of the thegns personal service with such a lord was held not to degrade but to ennoble. "Dish-thegn" and "bower-thegn," "house-thegn" and "horse-thegn" found themselves great officers of state; and the development of politics, the wider extension of home and foreign affairs were already transforming these royal officers into a

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CHAP. IV. standing council or ministry for the transaction of the ordinary administrative business and the reception of judicial appeals. Such a ministry, composed of thegns or prelates nominated by the king, and constituting in itself a large part of the Witenagemote when that assembly was gathered for legislative purposes, drew the actual control of affairs more and more into the hands of the sovereign himself.

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But the king's power was still a personal power. He had to be everywhere and to see for himself that everything he willed was done. The royal claims lay still far ahead of the real strength of the Crown. There was a want of administrative machinery in actual connexion with the government, responsible to it, drawing its force directly from it, and working automatically in its name even in moments when the royal power was itself weak or wavering. The Crown was strong under a king who was strong, whose personal action was felt everywhere throughout the realm, whose dread lay on every reeve and ealdorman. But with a weak king the Crown was weak. Ealdormen, provincial witanagemotes, local jurisdictions, ceased to move at the royal bidding the moment the direct royal pressure was loosened or removed. Enfeebled as they were, the old provincial jealousies, the old tendency to severance and isolation lingered on and woke afresh when the Crown fell to a nerveless ruler or to a child. And at the moment we have reached the royal power and the national union it embodied had to battle with fresh tendencies towards national disintegration which sprang like itself from the struggle with the Northman. The tendency towards personal dependence and towards a social organization based on personal dependence received an overpowering impulse from the strife. The long insecurity of a century of warfare drove the ceorl, the free tiller of the soil, to seek protection more and more from the thegn beside him. The freeman "commended" himself to a lord who promised aid, and as the price of this shelter he surrendered his freehold to

receive it back as a fief laden with conditions of military service. The principle of personal allegiance which was embodied in the very notion of thegnhood, itself tended to widen into a theory of general dependence. From Ælfred's day it was assumed that no man could exist without a lord. The "lordless man" became a sort of outlaw in the realm. The free man, the very base of the older English constitution, died down more and more into the "villein," the man who did suit and service to a master, who followed him to the field, who looked to his court for justice, who rendered days of service in his demesne. The same tendencies drew the lesser thegns around the greater nobles, and these around the provincial ealdormen. The ealdormen had hardly been dwarfed into lieutenants of the national sovereign before they again began to rise into petty kings, and in the century which follows we see Mercian or Northumbrian thegns following a Mercian or Northumbrian ealdorman to the field though it were against the lord of the land. Even the constitutional forms which sprang from the old English freedom tended to invest the higher nobles with a commanding power. In the "great meeting" of the Witenagemote or Assembly of the Wise lay the rule of the realm. It represented the whole English people, as the wise-moots of each kingdom represented the separate peoples of each; and its powers were as supreme in the wider field as theirs in the narrower. It could elect or depose the King. To it belonged the higher justice, the imposition of taxes, the making of laws, the conclusion of treaties, the control of wars, the disposal of public lands, the appointment of great officers of state. But such a meeting necessarily differed greatly in constitution from the Witans of the lesser kingdoms. The individual freeman, save when the host was gathered together, could hardly take part in its deliberations. The only relic of its popular character lay at last in the ring of citizens who gathered round the Wise Men at London or Winchester, and shouted their

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CHAP. IV. "aye" or "nay" at the election of a king. Distance and the hardships of travel made the presence of the lesser thegns as rare as that of the freemen; and the national council practically shrank into a gathering of the ealdormen, the bishops, and the officers of the crown.

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The old English democracy had thus all but passed into an oligarchy of the narrowest kind. The feudal movement which in other lands was breaking up every nation into a mass of loosely-knit states with nobles at their head who owned little save a nominal allegiance to their king threatened to break up England itself. What hindered its triumph was the power of the Crown, and it is the story of this struggle between the monarchy and these tendencies to feudal isolation which fills the period between the death of Eadred and the conquest of the Norman. It was a struggle which England shared with the rest of the western world, but its issue here was a peculiar one. In other countries feudalism won an easy victory over the central government. In England alone the monarchy was strong enough to hold feudalism at bay. Powerful as he might be, the English ealdorman never succeeded in becoming really hereditary or independent of the Crown. Kings as weak as Æthelred could drive ealdormen into exile and could replace them by fresh nominees. If the Witenagemote enabled the great nobles to bring their power to bear directly on the Crown, it preserved at any rate a feeling of national unity and was forced to back the Crown against individual revolt. The Church too never became feudalized. The bishop clung to the Crown, and the bishop remained a great social and political power. As local in area as the ealdorman, for the province was his diocese and he sat by his side in the local Witenagemote, he furnished a standing check on the independence of the great nobles. But if feudalism proved too weak to conquer the monarchy, it was strong enough to paralyze its action. Neither of the two forces could master the other, but each could weaken the other, and throughout the whole period

of their conflict England lay a prey to disorder within and to insult from without.

The first sign of these troubles was seen when the death of Eadred in 955 handed over the realm to a child King, his nephew Eadwig. Eadwig was swayed by a woman of high lineage, Æthelgifu; and the quarrel between her and the older counsellors of Eadred broke into open strife at the coronation feast. On the young King's insolent withdrawal to her chamber Dunstan, at the bidding of the Witan, drew him roughly back to his seat. But the feast was no sooner ended than a sentence of outlawry drove the abbot over sea, while the triumph of Æthelgifu was crowned in 957 by the marriage of her daughter to the King and the spoliation of the monasteries which Dunstan had befriended. As the new Queen was Eadwig's kinswoman the religious opinion of the day regarded his marriage as incestuous, and it was followed by a revolution. At the opening of 958 Archbishop Odo parted the King from his wife by solemn sentence; while the Mercians and Northumbrians rose in revolt, proclaimed Eadwig's brother Eadgar their king, and recalled Dunstan. The death of Eadwig a few months later restored the unity of the realm; but his successor Eadgar was only a boy of fourteen and throughout his reign the actual direction of affairs lay in the hands of Dunstan, whose elevation to the see of Canterbury set him at the head of the Church as of the State. The noblest tribute to his rule lies in the silence of our chroniclers. His work indeed was a work of settlement, and such a work was best done by the simple enforcement of peace. During the years of rest in which the stern hand of the Primate enforced justice and order Northman and Englishman drew together into a single people. Their union was the result of no direct policy of fusion; on the contrary Dunstan's policy preserved to the conquered Danelagh its local rights and local usages. But he recognized the men of the Danelagh as Englishmen, he employed

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CHAP. IV. Northmen in the royal service, and promoted them to high posts in Church and State. For the rest he trusted to time, and time justified his trust. The fusion was marked by a memorable change in the name of the land. Slowly as the conquering tribes had learned to know themselves by the one national name of Englishmen, they learned yet more slowly to stamp their name on the land they had won. It was not till Eadgar's day that the name of Britain passed into the name of Engla-land, the land of Englishmen, England. The same vigorous rule which secured rest for the country during these years of national union told on the growth of material prosperity. Commerce sprang into a wider life. Its extension is seen in the complaint that men learned fierceness from the Saxon of Germany, effeminacy from the Fleming, and drunkenness from the Dane. The laws of Æthelred which provide for the protection and regulation of foreign trade only recognize a state of things which grew up under Eadgar. "Men of the Empire," traders of Lower Lorraine and the Rhine-land, "Men of Rouen," traders from the new Norman duchy of the Seine, were seen in the streets of London. It was in Eadgar's day indeed that London rose to the commercial greatness it has held ever since.

*Eadgar
the
Martyr.*

Though Eadgar reigned for sixteen years, he was still in the prime of manhood when he died in 975. His death gave a fresh opening to the great nobles. He had bequeathed the Crown to his elder son Eadward; but the Ealdorman of East Anglia, Æthelwine, rose at once to set a younger child, Æthelred, on the throne. But the two primates of Canterbury and York who had joined in setting the crown on the head of Eadgar now joined in setting it on the head of Eadward, and Dunstan remained as before master of the realm. The boy's reign however was troubled by strife between the monastic party and their opponents till in 979 the quarrel was cut short by his murder at Corfe, and with the accession of Æthelred, the

power of Dunstan made way for that of Ealdorman Æthelwine and the Queen-mother. Some years of tranquillity followed this victory; but though Æthelwine preserved order at home he showed little sense of the danger which threatened from abroad. The North was girding itself for a fresh onset on England. The Scandinavian peoples had drawn together into their kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway; and it was no longer in isolated bands but in national hosts that they were about to seek conquests in the South. As Æthelred drew to manhood some chance descents on the coast told of this fresh stir in the North, and the usual result of the Northman's presence was seen in new risings among the Welsh.

In 991 Ealdorman Brihtnoth of East Anglia fell in battle with a Norwegian force at Maldon, and the withdrawal of the pirates had to be bought by money. Æthelwine too died at this moment, and the death of the two Ealdormen left Æthelred free to act as King. But his aim was rather to save the Crown from his nobles than England from the Northmen. Handsome and pleasant of address, the young King's pride showed itself in a string of imperial titles, and his restless and self-confident temper drove him to push the pretensions of the Crown to their furthest extent. His aim throughout his reign was to free himself from the dictation of the great nobles, and it was his indifference to their "rede" or counsel that won him the name of "Æthelred the Redeless." From the first he struck boldly at his foes, and Ælfgar, the Ealdorman of Mercia, whom the death of his rival Æthelwine left supreme in the realm, was driven by the King's hate to desert to a Danish force which he was sent in 992 to drive from the coast. Æthelred turned from his triumph at home to meet the forces of the Danish and Norwegian Kings, Swegen and Olaf, which anchored off London in 994. His policy throughout was a policy of diplomacy rather than of arms, and a treaty of subsidy gave time for intrigues

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which parted the invaders till troubles at home drew both again to the North. Æthelred took quick advantage of his success at home and abroad; the place of the great ealdormen in the royal councils was taken by court-thegns, in whom we see the rudiments of a ministry, while the King's fleet attacked the pirates' haunts in Cumberland and the Cotentin. But in spite of all this activity the news of a fresh invasion found England more weak and broken than ever. The rise of the "new men" only widened the breach between the court and the great nobles, and their resentment showed itself in delays which foiled every attempt of Æthelred to meet the pirate-bands who still clung to the coast.

Swegen.

They came probably from the other side of the Channel, and it was to clear them away as well as secure himself against Swegen's threatened descent that Æthelred took a step which brought England in contact with a land over-sea. Normandy, where the Northmen had settled a hundred years before, was now growing into a great power, and it was to win the friendship of Normandy and to close its harbours against Swegen that Æthelred in 1002 took the Norman Duke's daughter, Emma, to wife. The same dread of invasion gave birth to a panic of treason from the Northern mercenaries whom the King had drawn to settle in the land as a fighting force against their brethren; and an order of Æthelred brought about a general massacre of them on St. Brice's day. Wedding and murder however proved feeble defences against Swegen. His fleet reached the coast in 1003, and for four years he marched through the length and breadth of Southern and Eastern England, "lighting his war-beacons as he went" in blazing homestead and town. Then for a heavy bribe he withdrew, to prepare for a later and more terrible onset. But there was no rest for the realm. The fiercest of the Norwegian jarls took his place, and from Wessex the war extended over Mercia and East Anglia. In 1012 Canterbury was taken and sacked, Ælfheah the Archbishop dragged to Greenwich,

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and there in default of ransom brutally slain. The Danes set him in the midst of their husting, pelting him with bones and skulls of oxen, till one more pitiful than the rest clove his head with an axe. Meanwhile the court was torn with intrigue and strife, with quarrels between the court-thegns in their greed of power and yet fiercer quarrels between these favourites and the nobles whom they superseded in the royal councils. The King's policy of finding aid among his new ministers broke down when these became themselves ealdormen. With their local position they took up the feudal claims of independence; and Eadric, whom Æthelred raised to be Ealdorman of Mercia, became a power that overawed the Crown. In this paralysis of the central authority all organization and union was lost. "Shire would not help other" when Swegen returned in 1013. The war was terrible but short. Everywhere the country was pitilessly harried, churches plundered, men slaughtered. But, with the one exception of London, there was no attempt at resistance. Oxford and Winchester flung open their gates. The thegns of Wessex submitted to the Northmen at Bath. Even London was forced at last to give way, and Æthelred fled over-sea to a refuge in Normandy.

He was soon called back again. In the opening of 1014 Swegen died suddenly at Gainsborough; and the spell of terror was broken. The Witan recalled "their own born lord," and Æthelred returned to see the Danish fleet under Swegen's son, Cnut, sail away to the North. It was but to plan a more terrible return. Youth of nineteen as he was, Cnut showed from the first the vigour of his temper. Setting aside his brother he made himself King of Denmark; and at once gathered a splendid fleet for a fresh attack on England, whose King and nobles were again at strife, and where a bitter quarrel between Ealdorman Eadric of Mercia and Æthelred's son Eadmund Ironside broke the strength of the realm. The desertion of Eadric to Cnut as soon as he appeared off the coast threw open

CHAP. IV. England to his arms; Wessex and Mercia submitted to him; and though the loyalty of London enabled Eadmund, when his father's death raised him in 1016 to the throne, to struggle bravely for a few months against the Danes, a decisive overthrow at Assandun and a treaty of partition which this wrested from him at Olney were soon followed by the young King's death. Cnut was left master of the realm. His first acts of government showed little but the temper of the mere Northman, passionate, revengeful, uniting the guile of the savage with his thirst for blood. Eadric of Mercia, whose aid had given him the Crown, was felled by an axe-blow at the King's signal; a murder removed Eadwig, the brother of Eadmund Ironside, while the children of Eadmund were hunted even into Hungary by his ruthless hate. But from a savage such as this the young conqueror rose abruptly into a wise and temperate king. His aim during twenty years seems to have been to obliterate from men's minds the foreign character of his rule and the bloodshed in which it had begun.

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Conqueror indeed as he was, the Dane was no foreigner in the sense that the Norman was a foreigner after him. His language differed little from the English tongue. He brought in no new system of tenure or government. Cnut ruled in fact not as a foreign conqueror but as a native king. He dismissed his Danish host, and retaining only a trained band of household troops or "hus-carles" to serve as a body-guard relied boldly for support within his realm on the justice and good government he secured it. He fell back on "Eadgar's Law," on the old constitution of the realm, for his rule of government; and owned no difference between Dane and Englishman among his subjects. He identified himself even with the patriotism which had withstood the stranger. The Church had been the centre of the national resistance; Archbishop Ælfheah had been slain by Danish hands. But Cnut sought the friendship of the Church; he translated

Ælfheah's body with great pomp to Canterbury; he atoned for his father's ravages by gifts to the religious houses; he protected English pilgrims even against the robber-lords of the Alps. His love for monks broke out in a song which he composed as he listened to their chaunt at Ely. "Merrily sang the monks of Ely when Cnut King rowed by" across the vast fen-waters that surrounded their abbey. "Row, boatmen, near the land, and hear we these monks sing." A letter which Cnut wrote after twelve years of rule to his English subjects marks the grandeur of his character and the noble conception he had formed of kingship. "I have vowed to God to lead a right life in all things," wrote the King, "to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects, and to administer just judgement to all. If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just, through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready, with God's help, to amend it utterly." No royal officer, either for fear of the King or for favour of any, is to consent to injustice, none is to do wrong to rich or poor "as they would value my friendship and their own well-being." He especially denounces unfair exactions: "I have no need that money be heaped together for me by unjust demands." "I have sent this letter before me," Cnut ends, "that all the people of my realm may rejoice in my well-doing; for as you yourselves know, never have I spared, nor will I spare, to spend myself and my toil in what is needful and good for my people."

Cnut's greatest gift to his people was that of peace. With him began the long internal tranquillity which was from this time to be the key-note of the national history. Without, the Dane was no longer a terror; on the contrary it was English ships and English soldiers who now appeared in the North and followed Cnut in his campaigns against Wend or Norwegian. Within, the exhaustion which follows a long anarchy gave fresh strength to the Crown, and Cnut's own ruling temper was backed by the force of hus-carles at his disposal. The four Earls of

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CHAP. IV. Northumberland, Mercia, Wessex, and East Anglia, whom he set in the place of the older ealdormen, knew themselves to be the creatures of his will; the ablest indeed of their number, Godwine, Earl of Wessex, was the minister or close counsellor of the King. The troubles along the Northern border were ended by a memorable act of policy. From Eadgar's day the Scots had pressed further and further across the Firth of Forth till a victory of their King Malcolm over Earl Eadwulf at Carham in 1018 made him master of Northern Northumbria. In 1031 Cnut advanced to the North, but the quarrel ended in a formal cession of the district between the Forth and the Tweed, Lothian as it was called, to the Scot-King on his doing homage to Cnut. The gain told at once on the character of the Northern kingdom. The Kings of the Scots had till now been rulers simply of Gaelic and Celtic peoples; but from the moment that Lothian with its English farmers and English seamen became a part of their dominions it became the most important part. The Kings fixed their seat at Edinburgh, and in the midst of an English population passed from Gaelic chieftains into the Saxon rulers of a mingled people.

*Cnut's
Sons.*

But the greatness of Cnut's rule hung solely on the greatness of his temper, and the Danish power was shaken by his death in 1035. The empire he had built up at once fell to pieces. He had bequeathed both England and Denmark to his son Harthacnut; but the boy's absence enabled his brother, Harold Harefoot, to acquire all England save Godwine's earldom of Wessex, and in the end even Godwine was forced to submit to him. Harold's death in 1040 averted a conflict between the brothers, and placed Harthacnut quietly on the throne. But the love which Cnut's justice had won turned to hatred before the lawlessness of his successors. The long peace sickened men of their bloodshed and violence. "Never was a bloodier deed done in the land since the Danes came," ran a popular song, when Harold's men seized Ælfred,

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a brother of Eadmund Ironside, who returned to England from Normandy where he had found a refuge since his father's flight to its shores. Every tenth man among his followers was killed, the rest sold for slaves, and Ælfred's eyes torn out at Ely. Harthacnut, more savage than his predecessor, dug up his brother's body and flung it into a marsh; while a rising at Worcester against his huscarles was punished by the burning of the town and the pillage of the shire. The young King's death was no less brutal than his life; in 1042 "he died as he stood at his drink in the house of Osgod Clapa at Lambeth." England wearied of rulers such as these: but their crimes helped her to free herself from the impossible dream of Cnut. The North, still more barbarous than herself, could give her no new element of progress or civilization. It was the consciousness of this and a hatred of rulers such as Harold and Harthacnut which co-operated with the old feeling of reverence for the past in calling back the line of Ælfred to the throne.

It is in such transitional moments of a nation's history that it needs the cool prudence, the sensitive selfishness, the quick perception of what is possible, which distinguished the adroit politician whom the death of Cnut left supreme in England. Originally of obscure origin, Godwine's ability had raised him high in the royal favour; he was allied to Cnut by marriage, entrusted by him with the earldom of Wessex, and at last made the Viceroy or justiciar of the King in the government of the realm. In the wars of Scandinavia he had shown courage and skill at the head of a body of English troops, but his true field of action lay at home. Shrewd, eloquent, an active administrator, Godwine united vigilance, industry, and caution with a singular dexterity in the management of men. During the troubled years that followed the death of Cnut he did his best to continue his master's policy in securing the internal union of England under a Danish sovereign and in preserving her connexion with the North. But at

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*Eadward
the
Confessor.*

CHAP. IV. the death of Harthacnut Cnut's policy had become impos-
 Feudalism and the Monarchy. sible, and abandoning the Danish cause Godwine drifted
 954-1071. with the tide of popular feeling which called Eadward, the
 one living son of Æthelred, to the throne. Eadward had
 lived from his youth in exile at the court of Normandy.
 A halo of tenderness spread in after-time round this last
 King of the old English stock; legends told of his pious
 simplicity, his blitheness and gentleness of mood, the
 holiness that gained him his name of "Confessor" and
 enshrined him as a Saint in his abbey-church at West-
 minster. Gleemen sang in manlier tones of the long peace
 and glories of his reign, how warriors and wise counsellors
 stood round his throne, and Welsh and Scot and Briton
 obeyed him. His was the one figure that stood out bright
 against the darkness when England lay trodden under foot
 by Norman conquerors; and so dear became his memory
 that liberty and independence itself seemed incarnate in
 his name. Instead of freedom, the subjects of William or
 Henry called for the "good laws of Eadward the Con-
 fessor." But it was as a mere shadow of the past that the
 exile really returned to the throne of Ælfred; there was
 something shadow-like in his thin form, his delicate com-
 plexion, his transparent womanly hands; and it is almost
 as a shadow that he glides over the political stage. The
 work of government was done by sterner hands.

Godwine.

Throughout his earlier reign, in fact, England lay in
 the hands of its three Earls, Siward of Northumbria,
 Leofric of Mercia, and Godwine of Wessex, and it seemed
 as if the feudal tendency to provincial separation against
 which Æthelred had struggled was to triumph with the
 death of Cnut. What hindered this severance was the
 greed of Godwine. Siward was isolated in the North:
 Leofric's earldom was but a fragment of Mercia. But the
 Earl of Wessex, already master of the wealthiest part of
 England, seized district after district for his house. His
 son Swegen secured an earldom in the south-west; his son
 Harold became Earl of East Anglia; his nephew Beorn was

established in Central England: while the marriage of his
 daughter Eadgyth to the King himself gave Godwine a
 hold upon the throne. Policy led the Earl, as it led his
 son, rather to aim at winning England itself than at break-
 ing up England to win a mere fief in it. But his aim
 found a sudden check through the lawlessness of his son
 Swegen. Swegen seduced the abbess of Leominster, sent
 her home again with a yet more outrageous demand of her
 hand in marriage, and on the King's refusal to grant it
 fled from the realm. Godwine's influence secured his
 pardon, but on his very return to seek it Swegen murdered
 his cousin Beorn who had opposed the reconciliation and
 again fled to Flanders. A storm of national indignation
 followed him over-sea. The meeting of the Wise men
 branded him as "nothing," the "utterly worthless," yet in a
 year his father wrested a new pardon from the King and
 restored him to his earldom. The scandalous inlawing of
 such a criminal left Godwine alone in a struggle which
 soon arose with Eadward himself. The King was a
 stranger in his realm, and his sympathies lay naturally
 with the home and friends of his youth and exile. He
 spoke the Norman tongue. He used in Norman fashion a
 seal for his charters. He set Norman favourites in the
 highest posts of Church and State. Foreigners such as
 these, though hostile to the minister, were powerless
 against Godwine's influence and ability, and when at a
 later time they ventured to stand alone against him they
 fell without a blow. But the general ill-will at Swegen's
 inlawing enabled them to stir Eadward to attack the Earl,
 and in 1051 a trivial quarrel brought the opportunity of
 a decisive break with him. On his return from a visit
 to the court Eustace, Count of Boulogne, the husband of
 the King's sister, demanded quarters for his train in
 Dover. Strife arose, and many both of the burghers and
 foreigners were slain. All Godwine's better nature with-
 stood Eadward when the King angrily bade him exact
 vengeance from the town for the affront of his kinsman;

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CHAP. IV. and he claimed a fair trial for the townsmen. But
 Feudalism Eadward looked on his refusal as an outrage, and the
 and the quarrel widened into open strife. Godwine at once
 Monarchy. gathered his forces and marched upon Gloucester,
 954- demanding the expulsion of the foreign favourites. But
 1071. even in a just quarrel the country was cold in his support.
 The Earls of Mercia and Northumberland united their
 forces to those of Eadward at Gloucester, and marched
 with the King to a gathering of the Witenagemote at
 London. Godwine again appeared in arms, but Sweegen's
 outlawry was renewed, and the Earl of Wessex, declining
 with his usual prudence a useless struggle, withdrew over-
 sea to Flanders.

Harold. But the wrath of the nation was appeased by his fall.
 Great as were Godwine's faults, he was the one man who
 now stood between England and the rule of the strangers
 who flocked to the Court; and a year had hardly passed
 when he was strong enough to return. At the appearance
 of his fleet in the Thames in 1052 Eadward was once
 more forced to yield. The foreign prelates and bishops
 fled over-sea, outlawed by the same meeting of the Wise
 men which restored Godwine to his home. But he re-
 turned only to die, and the direction of affairs passed
 quietly to his son Harold. Harold came to power un-
 fettered by the obstacles which beset his father, and for
 twelve years he was the actual governor of the realm.
 The courage, the ability, the genius for administration,
 the ambition and subtlety of Godwine were found again in
 his son. In the internal government of England he fol-
 lowed out his father's policy while avoiding its excesses.
 Peace was preserved, justice administered, and the realm
 increased in wealth and prosperity. Its gold work and em-
 broidery became famous in the markets of Flanders and
 France. Disturbances from without were crushed sternly
 and rapidly; Harold's military talents displayed them-
 selves in a campaign against Wales, and in the boldness
 and rapidity with which, arming his troops with weapons

adapted for mountain conflict, he penetrated to the heart
 of its fastnesses and reduced the country to complete sub-
 mission. With the gift of the Northumbrian earldom on
 Siward's death to his brother Tostig all England save a
 small part of the older Mercia lay in the hands of the
 house of Godwine, and as the waning health of the King,
 the death of his nephew, the son of Eadmund who had
 returned from Hungary as his heir, and the childhood of
 the Ætheling Eadgar who stood next in blood, removed
 obstacle after obstacle to his plans, Harold patiently but
 steadily moved forward to the throne.

But his advance was watched by one even more able and
 ambitious than himself. For the last half century England
 had been drawing nearer to the Norman land which fronted
 it across the Channel. As we pass now-a-days through
 Normandy, it is English history which is round about us.
 The name of hamlet after hamlet has memories for
 English ears; a fragment of castle wall marks the home of
 the Bruce, a tiny village preserves the name of the Percy.
 The very look of the country and its people seem familiar
 to us; the Norman peasant in his cap and blouse recalls
 the build and features of the small English farmer; the
 fields about Caen, with their dense hedgerows, their elms,
 their apple-orchards, are the very picture of an English
 country-side. Huge cathedrals lift themselves over the
 red-tiled roofs of little market towns, the models of stately
 fabrics which superseded the lowlier churches of Ælfred
 or Dunstan, while the windy heights that look over orchard
 and meadowland are crowned with the square grey keeps
 which Normandy gave to the cliffs of Richmond and the
 banks of Thames. It was Rolf the Ganger, or Walker, a
 pirate leader like Guthrum or Hasting, who wrested this
 land from the French king, Charles the Simple, in 912, at
 the moment when Ælfred's children were beginning their
 conquest of the English Danelagh. The treaty of Clair-on-
 Epte in which France purchased peace by this cession of
 the coast was a close imitation of the Peace of Wedmore.

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Rolf, like Guthrum, was baptized, received the King's daughter in marriage, and became his vassal for the territory which now took the name of "the Northman's land" or Normandy. But vassalage and the new faith sat lightly on the Dane. No such ties of blood and speech tended to unite the Northman with the French among whom he settled along the Seine as united him to the Englishmen among whom he settled along the Humber. William Longsword, the son of Rolf, though wavering towards France and Christianity, remained a Northman in heart; he called in a Danish colony to occupy his conquest of the Cotentin, the peninsula which runs out from St. Michael's Mount to the cliffs of Cherbourg, and reared his boy among the Northmen of Bayeux where the Danish tongue and fashions most stubbornly held their own. A heathen reaction followed his death, and the bulk of the Normans, with the child Duke Richard, fell away for the time from Christianity, while new pirate-fleets came swarming up the Seine. To the close of the century the whole people were still "Pirates". to the French around them, their land the "Pirates' land," their Duke the "Pirates' Duke." Yet in the end the same forces which merged the Dane in the Englishman told even more powerfully on the Dane in France. No race has ever shown a greater power of absorbing all the nobler characteristics of the peoples with whom they came in contact, or of infusing their own energy into them. During the long reign of Duke Richard the Fearless, the son of William Longsword, a reign which lasted from 945 to 996, the heathen Northmen pirates became French Christians and feudal at heart. The old Norse language lived only at Bayeux and in a few local names. As the old Northern freedom died silently away, the descendants of the pirates became feudal nobles and the "Pirates' land" sank into the most loyal of the fiefs of France.

Duke
William.

From the moment of their settlement on the Frankish coast, the Normans had been jealously watched by the

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English kings; and the anxiety of Æthelred for their friendship set a Norman woman on the English throne. The marriage of Emma with Æthelred brought about a close political connexion between the two countries. It was in Normandy that the King found a refuge from Swegen's invasion, and his younger boys grew up in exile at the Norman court. Their presence there drew the eyes of every Norman to the rich land which offered so tempting a prey across the Channel. The energy which they had shown in winning their land from the Franks, in absorbing the French civilization and the French religion, was now showing itself in adventures on far-off shores, in crusades against the Moslem of Spain or the Arabs of Sicily. It was this spirit of adventure that roused the Norman Duke Robert to sail against England in Cnut's day under pretext of setting Æthelred's children on its throne, but the wreck of his fleet in a storm put an end to a project which might have anticipated the work of his son. It was that son, William the Great, as men of his own day styled him, William the Conqueror as he was to stamp himself by one event on English history, who was now Duke of Normandy. The full grandeur of his indomitable will, his large and patient statesmanship, the loftiness of aim which lifts him out of the petty incidents of his age, were as yet only partly disclosed. But there never had been a moment from his boyhood when he was not among the greatest of men. His life from the very first was one long mastering of difficulty after difficulty. The shame of his birth remained in his name of "the Bastard." His father Robert had seen Arlotta, a tanner's daughter of the town, as she washed her linen in a little brook by Falaise; and loving her he had made her the mother of his boy. The departure of Robert on a pilgrimage from which he never returned left William a child-ruler among the most turbulent baronage in Christendom; treason and anarchy surrounded him as he grew to manhood; and disorder broke at last into open revolt. But in

CHAP. IV. 1047 a fierce combat of horse on the slopes of Val-es-dunes beside Caen left the young Duke master of his duchy and he soon made his mastery felt. "Normans" said a Norman poet "must be trodden down and kept under foot, for he only that bridles them may use them at his need." In the stern order he forced on the land Normandy from this hour felt the bridle of its Duke.

William and France. Secure at home, William seized the moment of Godwine's exile to visit England, and received from his cousin, King Eadward, as he afterwards asserted, a promise of succession to his throne. Such a promise however, unconfirmed by the Witenagemote, was valueless; and the return of Godwine must have at once cut short the young Duke's hopes. He found in fact work enough to do in his own duchy, for the discontent of his baronage at the stern justice of his rule found support in the jealousy which his power raised in the states around him, and it was only after two great victories at Mortemer and Varaville and six years of hard fighting that outer and inner foes were alike trodden under foot. In 1060 William stood first among the princes of France. Maine submitted to his rule. Brittany was reduced to obedience by a single march. While some of the rebel barons rotted in the Duke's dungeons and some were driven into exile, the land settled down into a peace which gave room for a quick upgrowth of wealth and culture. Learning and education found their centre in the school of Bec, which the teaching of a Lombard scholar, Lanfranc, raised in a few years into the most famous school of Christendom. Lanfranc's first contact with William, if it showed the Duke's imperious temper, showed too his marvellous insight into men. In a strife with the Papacy which William provoked by his marriage with Matilda, a daughter of the Count of Flanders, Lanfranc took the side of Rome. His opposition was met by a sentence of banishment, and the Prior had hardly set out on a lame horse, the only one his house could afford, when he was overtaken by the Duke, impatient that he should

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quit Normandy. "Give me a better horse and I shall go the quicker," replied the imperturbable Lombard, and William's wrath passed into laughter and good will. From that hour Lanfranc became his minister and counsellor, whether for affairs in the duchy itself or for the more daring schemes of ambition which opened up across the Channel.

William's hopes of the English crown are said to have been revived by a storm which threw Harold, while cruising in the Channel, on the coast of Ponthieu. Its count sold him to the Duke; and as the price of return to England William forced him to swear on the relics of saints to support his claim to its throne. But, true or no, the oath told little on Harold's course. As the childless King drew to his grave one obstacle after another was cleared from the Earl's path. His brother Tostig had become his most dangerous rival; but a revolt of the Northumbrians drove Tostig to Flanders, and the Earl was able to win over the Mercian house of Leofric to his cause by owning Morkere, the brother of the Mercian Earl Eadwine, as his brother's successor. His aim was in fact attained without a struggle. In the opening of 1066 the nobles and bishops who gathered round the death-bed of the Confessor passed quietly from it to the election and coronation of Harold. But at Rouen the news was welcomed with a burst of furious passion, and the Duke of Normandy at once prepared to enforce his claim by arms. William did not claim the Crown. He claimed simply the right which he afterwards used when his sword had won it of presenting himself for election by the nation, and he believed himself entitled so to present himself by the direct commendation of the Confessor. The actual election of Harold which stood in his way, hurried as it was, he did not recognize as valid. But with this constitutional claim was inextricably mingled resentment at the private wrong which Harold had done him, and a resolve to exact vengeance on the man whom he regarded as

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*Stamford
Bridge.*

But his rival's difficulties were hardly less than his own. Harold was threatened with invasion not only by William but by his brother Tostig, who had taken refuge in Norway and secured the aid of its King, Harald Hardrada. The fleet and army he had gathered lay watching for months along the coast. His one standing force was his body of hus-carles, but their numbers only enabled them to act as the nucleus of an army. On the other hand the Land-fyrd or general levy of fighting-men was a body easy to raise for any single encounter but hard to keep together. To assemble such a force was to bring labour to a standstill. The men gathered under the King's standard were the farmers and ploughmen of their fields. The ships were the fishing-vessels of the coast. In September the task of holding them together became impossible, but their dispersion had hardly taken place when the two clouds which had so long been gathering burst at once upon the realm. A change of wind released the landlocked armament of William; but before changing, the wind which prisoned the Duke brought the host of Tostig and Harald Hardrada to the coast of Yorkshire. The King hastened with his household troops to the north and repulsed the Norwegians in a decisive overthrow at Stamford Bridge, but ere he could hurry back to London the

Norman host had crossed the sea and William, who had anchored on the twenty-eighth of September off Pevensey, was ravaging the coast to bring his rival to an engagement. His merciless ravages succeeded in drawing Harold from London to the south; but the King wisely refused to attack with the troops he had hastily summoned to his banner. If he was forced to give battle, he resolved to give it on ground he had himself chosen, and advancing near enough to the coast to check William's ravages he entrenched himself on a hill known afterwards as that of Senlac, a low spur of the Sussex downs near Hastings. His position covered London and drove William to concentrate his forces. With a host subsisting by pillage, to concentrate is to starve; and no alternative was left to the Duke but a decisive victory or ruin.

On the fourteenth of October William led his men at dawn along the higher ground that leads from Hastings to the battle-field which Harold had chosen. From the mound of Telham the Normans saw the host of the English gathered thickly behind a rough trench and a stockade on the height of Senlac. Marshy ground covered their right; on the left, the most exposed part of the position, the hus-carles or body-guard of Harold, men in full armour and wielding huge axes, were grouped round the Golden Dragon of Wessex and the Standard of the King. The rest of the ground was covered by thick masses of half-armed rustics who had flocked at Harold's summons to the fight with the stranger. It was against the centre of this formidable position that William arrayed his Norman knighthood, while the mercenary forces he had gathered in France and Brittany were ordered to attack its flanks. A general charge of the Norman foot opened the battle; in front rode the minstrel Taillefer, tossing his sword in the air and catching it again while he chaunted the song of Roland. He was the first of the host who struck a blow, and he was the first to fall. The charge broke vainly on the stout stockade behind which the English warriors plied

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axe and javelin with fierce cries of "Out, out," and the repulse of the Norman footmen was followed by a repulse of the Norman horse. Again and again the Duke rallied and led them to the fatal stockade. All the fury of fight that glowed in his Norseman's blood, all the headlong valour that spurred him over the slopes of Val-ès-dunes, mingled that day with the coolness of head, the dogged perseverance, the inexhaustible faculty of resource which shone at Mortemer and Varaville. His Breton troops, entangled in the marshy ground on his left, broke in disorder, and as panic spread through the army a cry arose that the Duke was slain. William tore off his helmet; "I live," he shouted, "and by God's help I will conquer yet." Maddened by a fresh repulse, the Duke spurred right at the Standard; unhorsed, his terrible mace struck down Gyrth, the King's brother; again dismounted, a blow from his hand hurled to the ground an unmannerly rider who would not lend him his steed. Amidst the roar and tumult of the battle he turned the flight he had arrested into the means of victory. Broken as the stockade was by his desperate onset, the shield-wall of the warriors behind it still held the Normans at bay till William by a feint of flight drew a part of the English force from their post of vantage. Turning on his disorderly pursuers, the Duke cut them to pieces, broke through the abandoned line, and made himself master of the central ground. Meanwhile the French and Bretons made good their ascent on either flank. At three the hill seemed won, at six the fight still raged around the Standard where Harold's hus-carles stood stubbornly at bay on a spot marked afterwards by the high altar of Battle Abbey. An order from the Duke at last brought his archers to the front. Their arrow-flight told heavily on the dense masses crowded around the King and as the sun went down a shaft pierced Harold's right eye. He fell between the royal ensigns, and the battle closed with a desperate melley over his corpse.

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Night covered the flight of the English army: but William was quick to reap the advantage of his victory. Securing Romney and Dover, he marched by Canterbury upon London. Faction and intrigue were doing his work for him as he advanced; for Harold's brothers had fallen with the King on the field of Senlac, and there was none of the house of Godwine to contest the crown. Of the old royal line there remained but a single boy, Eadgar the Ætheling. He was chosen King; but the choice gave little strength to the national cause. The widow of the Confessor surrendered Winchester to the Duke. The bishops gathered at London inclined to submission. The citizens themselves faltered as William, passing by their walls, gave Southwark to the flames. The throne of the boy-king really rested for support on the Earls of Mercia and Northumbria, Eadwine and Morkere; and William, crossing the Thames at Wallingford and marching into Hertfordshire, threatened to cut them off from their earldoms. The masterly movement forced the Earls to hurry home, and London gave way at once. Eadgar himself was at the head of the deputation who came to offer the crown to the Norman Duke. "They bowed to him," says the English annalist, pathetically, "for need." They bowed to the Norman as they had bowed to the Dane, and William accepted the crown in the spirit of Cnut. London indeed was secured by the erection of a fortress which afterwards grew into the Tower, but William desired to reign not as a conqueror but as a lawful king. At Christmas he received the crown at Westminster from the hands of Archbishop Ealdred amid shouts of "Yea, Yea," from his new English subjects. Fines from the greater landowners atoned for a resistance which now counted as rebellion; but with this exception every measure of the new sovereign showed his desire of ruling as a successor of Eadward or Ælfred. As yet indeed the greater part of England remained quietly aloof from him, and he can hardly be said to have been recognized as king

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by Northumberland or the greater part of Mercia. But to the east of a line which stretched from Norwich to Dorsetshire his rule was unquestioned, and over this portion he ruled as an English king. His soldiers were kept in strict order. No change was made in law or custom. The privileges of London were recognized by a royal writ which still remains, the most venerable of its muniments, among the city's archives. Peace and order were restored. William even attempted, though in vain, to learn the English tongue that he might personally administer justice to the suitors in his court. The kingdom seemed so tranquil that only a few months had passed after the battle of Senlac when leaving England in charge of his brother, Odo Bishop of Bayeux, and his minister, William Fitz-Osbern, the King returned in 1067 for a while to Normandy. The peace he left was soon indeed disturbed. Bishop Odo's tyranny forced the Kentishmen to seek aid from Count Eustace of Boulogne; while the Welsh princes supported a similar rising against Norman oppression in the west. But as yet the bulk of the land held fairly to the new king. Dover was saved from Eustace; and the discontented fled over sea to seek refuge in lands as far off as Constantinople, where Englishmen from this time formed great part of the body-guard or Varangians of the Eastern Emperors. William returned to take his place again as an English King. It was with an English force that he subdued a rising in the south-west with Exeter at its head, and it was at the head of an English army that he completed his work by marching to the North. His march brought Eadwine and Morkere again to submission; a fresh rising ended in the occupation of York, and England as far as the Tees lay quietly at William's feet.

*The
Norman
Conquest.*

It was in fact only the national revolt of 1068 that transformed the King into a conqueror. The signal for this revolt came from Swegen, King of Denmark, who had for two years past been preparing to dispute England with the Norman, but on the appearance of his fleet in the Humber all northern, all western and south-western

England rose as one man. Eadgar the Ætheling with a band of exiles who had found refuge in Scotland took the head of the Northumbrian revolt; in the south-west the men of Devon, Somerset, and Dorset gathered to the sieges of Exeter and Montacute; while a new Norman castle at Shrewsbury alone bridled a rising in the West. So ably had the revolt been planned that even William was taken by surprise. The outbreak was heralded by a storm of York and the slaughter of three thousand Normans who formed its garrison. The news of this slaughter reached William as he was hunting in the forest of Dean; and in a wild outburst of wrath he swore "by the splendour of God" to avenge himself on the North. But wrath went hand in hand with the coolest statesmanship. The centre of resistance lay in the Danish fleet, and pushing rapidly to the Humber with a handful of horsemen William bought at a heavy price its inactivity and withdrawal. Then turning westward with the troops that gathered round him he swept the Welsh border and relieved Shrewsbury while William Fitz-Osbern broke the rising around Exeter. His success set the King free to fulfil his oath of vengeance on the North. After a long delay before the flooded waters of the Aire he entered York and ravaged the whole country as far as the Tees. Town and village were harried and burned, their inhabitants were slain or driven over the Scottish border. The coast was especially wasted that no hold might remain for future landings of the Danes. Crops, cattle, the very implements of husbandry were so mercilessly destroyed that a famine which followed is said to have swept off more than a hundred thousand victims. Half a century later indeed the land still lay bare of culture and deserted of men for sixty miles northward of York. The work of vengeance once over, William led his army back from the Tees to York, and thence to Chester and the West. Never had he shown the grandeur of his character so memorably as in this terrible march. The winter was hard, the roads choked with snowdrifts or broken by

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torrents, provisions failed; and his army, storm-beaten and forced to devour its horses for food, broke out into mutiny at the order to cross the bleak moorlands that part Yorkshire from the West. The mercenaries from Anjou and Brittany demanded their release from service. William granted their prayer with scorn. On foot, at the head of the troops which still clung to him, he forced his way by paths inaccessible to horses, often helping the men with his own hands to clear the road, and as the army descended upon Chester the resistance of the English died away.

For two years William was able to busy himself in castle-building and in measures for holding down the conquered land. How effective these were was seen when the last act of the conquest was reached. All hope of Danish aid was now gone, but Englishmen still looked for help to Scotland where Eadgar the Ætheling had again found refuge and where his sister Margaret had become wife of King Malcolm. It was probably some assurance of Malcolm's aid which roused the Mercian Earls, Eadwine and Morkere, to a fresh rising in 1071. But the revolt was at once foiled by the vigilance of the Conqueror. Eadwine fell in an obscure skirmish, while Morkere found shelter for a while in the fen country where a desperate band of patriots gathered round an outlawed leader, Hereward. Nowhere had William found so stubborn a resistance: but a causeway two miles long was at last driven across the marshes, and the last hopes of English freedom died in the surrender of Ely. It was as the unquestioned master of England that William marched to the North, crossed the Lowlands and the Forth, and saw Malcolm appear in his camp upon the Tay to swear fealty at his feet.

BOOK II.

ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS.

1071—1214.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK II.

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Among the Norman chroniclers Orderic becomes from this point particularly valuable and detailed. The Chronicle and Florence of Worcester remain the primary English authorities, while Simeon of Durham gives much special information on northern matters. For the reign of William the Red the chief source of information is Eadmer, a monk of Canterbury, in his "*Historia Novorum*" and "*Life of Anselm*." William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon are both contemporary authorities during that of Henry the First; the latter remains a brief but accurate annalist; the former is the leader of a new historic school, who treat English events as part of the history of the world, and emulate classic models by a more philosophical arrangement of their materials. To these the opening of Stephen's reign adds the "*Gesta Stephani*," a record in great detail by one of the King's clerks, and the Hexham Chroniclers.

All this wealth of historical material however suddenly leaves us in the chaos of civil war. Even the Chronicle dies out in the midst of Stephen's reign, and the close at the same time of the works we have noted leaves a blank in our historical literature which extends over the early years of Henry the Second. But this dearth is followed by a vast outburst of historical industry. For the Becket struggle we have the mass of the Archbishop's own correspondence with that of Foliot and John of Salisbury. From 1169 to 1192 our primary authority is the Chronicle known as that of Benedict of Peterborough, whose authorship Professor Stubbs has shown to be more probably due to the royal treasurer, Bishop Richard Fitz-Neal. This is continued to 1201 by Roger of Howden in a record of equally official value. William of Newborough's history, which ends in 1198, is a work of the classical school, like William of Malmesbury's. It is distinguished by its fairness and good sense. To these may be added the Chronicle of Ralph Niger, with the additions of Ralph of Coggeshall, that of Gervais of Canterbury, and the interesting life of St. Hugh of Lincoln.

But the intellectual energy of Henry the Second's time is shown even more remarkably in the mass of general literature which lies behind these distinctively historical sources, in the treatises of John of Salisbury, the voluminous works of Giraldus Cambrensis, the

"Trifles" and satires of Walter Map, Glanvill's treatise on *Law*, Richard Fitz-Neal's "Dialogue on the Exchequer," to which we owe our knowledge of Henry's financial system, the romances of Gaimar and of Wace, the poem of the *San Graal*. But this intellectual fertility is far from ceasing with Henry the Second. The thirteenth century has hardly begun when the romantic impulse quickens even the old English tongue in the long poem of *Layamon*. The Chronicle of Richard of Devizes and an "Itinerarium Regis" supplement Roger of Howden for Richard's reign. With John we enter upon the Annals of Barnwell and are aided by the invaluable series of the Chroniclers of St. Albans. Among the side topics of the time, we may find much information as to the Jews in Toovey's "*Anglia Judaica*"; the Chronicle of Jocelyn of Brakelond gives us a peep into social and monastic life; the Cistercian revival may be traced in the records of the Cistercian abbeys in Dugdale's *Monasticon*; the Charter Rolls give some information as to municipal history; and constitutional developement may be traced in the documents collected by Professor Stubbs in his "*Select Charters*."

CHAPTER I.

THE CONQUEROR.

1071—1085.

IN the five hundred years that followed the landing of Hengest Britain had become England, and its conquest had ended in the settlement of its conquerors, in their conversion to Christianity, in the birth of a national literature, of an imperfect civilization, of a rough political order. But through the whole of this earlier age every attempt to fuse the various tribes of conquerors into a single nation had failed. The effort of Northumbria to extend her rule over all England had been foiled by the resistance of Mercia; that of Mercia by the resistance of Wessex. Wessex herself, even under the guidance of great kings and statesmen, had no sooner reduced the country to a seeming unity than local independence rose again at the call of the Northmen. The sense of a single England deepened with the pressure of the invaders; the monarchy of Ælfred and his house broadened into an English kingdom; but still tribal jealousies battled with national unity. Northumbrian lay apart from West-Saxon, Northman from Englishman. A common national sympathy held the country roughly together, but a real national union had yet to come. It came with foreign rule. The rule of the Danish kings broke local jealousies as they had never been broken before, and bequeathed a new England to Godwine and the Confessor. But Cnut was more Englishman than Northman, and his system of government was an English

*The
Foreign
Kings.*

CHAP. I. system. The true foreign yoke was only felt when England saw its conqueror in William the Norman.

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For nearly a century and a half, from the hour when William turned triumphant from the fens of Ely to the hour when John fled defeated from Norman shores, our story is one of foreign masters. Kings from Normandy were followed by kings from Anjou. But whether under Norman or Angevin Englishmen were a subject race, conquered and ruled by men of strange blood and of strange speech. And yet it was in these years of subjection that England first became really England. Provincial differences were finally crushed into national unity by the pressure of the stranger. The firm government of her foreign kings secured the land a long and almost unbroken peace in which the new nation grew to a sense of its oneness, and this consciousness was strengthened by the political ability which in Henry the First gave it administrative order and in Henry the Second built up the fabric of its law. New elements of social life were developed alike by the suffering and the prosperity of the times. The wrong which had been done by the degradation of the free landowner into a feudal dependant was partially redressed by the degradation of the bulk of the English lords themselves into a middle class as they were pushed from their place by the foreign baronage who settled on English soil; and this social change was accompanied by a gradual enrichment and elevation of the class of servile and semi-servile cultivators which had lifted them at the close of this period into almost complete freedom. The middle-class which was thus created was reinforced by the upgrowth of a corresponding class in our towns. Commerce and trade were promoted by the justice and policy of the foreign kings; and with their advance rose the political importance of the trader. The boroughs of England, which at the opening of this period were for the most part mere villages, were rich enough at its close to buy liberty from the Crown and to stand ready for the

mightier part they were to play in the developement of our parliament. The shame of conquest, the oppression of the conquerors, begot a moral and religious revival which raised religion into a living thing; while the close connexion with the Continent which foreign conquest brought about secured for England a new communion with the artistic and intellectual life of the world without her.

In a word, it is to the stern discipline of our foreign kings that we owe not merely English wealth and English freedom but England herself. And of these foreign masters the greatest was William of Normandy. In William the wild impulses of the Northman's blood mingled strangely with the cool temper of the modern statesman. As he was the last, so he was the most terrible outcome of the northern race. The very spirit of the sea-robbers from whom he sprang seemed embodied in his gigantic form, his enormous strength, his savage countenance, his desperate bravery, the fury of his wrath, the ruthlessness of his revenge. "No knight under Heaven," his enemies owned, "was William's peer." Boy as he was at Val-ès-dunes, horse and man went down before his lance. All the fierce gaiety of his nature broke out in the warfare of his youth, in his rout of fifteen Angevins with but five men at his back, in his defiant ride over the ground which Geoffry Martel claimed from him, a ride with hawk on fist as if war and the chase were one. No man could bend William's bow. His mace crashed its way through a ring of English warriors to the foot of the Standard. He rose to his greatest height at moments when other men despaired. His voice rang out as a trumpet when his soldiers fled before the English charge at Senlac, and his rally turned the flight into a means of victory. In his winter march on Chester he strode afoot at the head of his fainting troops and helped with his own hand to clear a road through the snowdrifts. And with the Northman's daring broke out the Northman's pitilessness. When the townsmen of Alençon hung raw hides along their walls

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in scorn of the "tanner's" grandson, William tore out his prisoners' eyes, hewed off their hands and feet, and flung them into the town. Hundreds of Hampshire men were driven from their homes to make him a hunting-ground and his harrying of Northumbria left Northern England a desolate waste. Of men's love or hate he recked little. His grim look, his pride, his silence, his wild outbursts of passion, left William lonely even in his court. His subjects trembled as he passed. "Stark man he was" writes the English chronicler "and great awe men had of him." His very wrath was solitary. "To no man spake he and no man dared speak to him" when the news reached him of Harold's seizure of the throne. It was only when he passed from his palace to the loneliness of the woods that the King's temper unbent. "He loved the wild deer as though he had been their father."

His rule.

It was the genius of William which lifted him out of this mere Northman into a great general and a great statesman. The wary strategy of his French campaigns, the organization of his attack upon England, the victory at Senlac, the quick resource, the steady perseverance which achieved the Conquest showed the wide range of his generalship. His political ability had shown itself from the first moment of his accession to the ducal throne. William had the instinct of government. He had hardly reached manhood when Normandy lay peaceful at his feet. Revolt was crushed. Disorder was trampled under foot. The Duke "could never love a robber," be he baron or knave. The sternness of his temper stamped itself throughout upon his rule. "Stark he was to men that withstood him," says the Chronicler of his English system of government; "so harsh and cruel was he that none dared withstand his will. Earls that did aught against his bidding he cast into bonds; bishops he stripped of their bishopricks, abbots of their abbacies. He spared not his own brother: first he was in the land, but the King cast him into bondage. If a man would live and hold his lands, need it were

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he followed the King's will." Stern as such a rule was, its sternness gave rest to the land. Even amidst the sufferings which necessarily sprang from the circumstances of the Conquest itself, from the erection of castles or the enclosure of forests or the exactions which built up William's hoard at Winchester, Englishmen were unable to forget "the good peace he made in the land, so that a man might fare over his realm with a bosom full of gold." Strange touches too of a humanity far in advance of his age contrasted with this general temper of the Conqueror's government. One of the strongest traits in his character was an aversion to shed blood by process of law; he formally abolished the punishment of death, and only a single execution stains the annals of his reign. An edict yet more honourable to his humanity put an end to the slave-trade which had till then been carried on at the port of Bristol. The contrast between the ruthlessness and pitifulness of his public acts sprang indeed from a contrast within his temper itself. The pitiless warrior, the stern and awful king was a tender and faithful husband, an affectionate father. The lonely silence of his bearing broke into gracious converse with pure and sacred souls like Anselm. If William was "stark" to rebel and baron, men noted that he was "mild to those that loved God."

But the greatness of the Conqueror was seen in more than the order and peace which he imposed upon the land. Fortune had given him one of the greatest opportunities ever offered to a king of stamping his own genius on the destinies of a people; and it is the way in which he seized on this opportunity which has set William among the foremost statesmen of the world. The struggle which ended in the fens of Ely had wholly changed his position. He no longer held the land merely as its national and elected King. To his elective right he added the right of conquest. It is the way in which William grasped and employed this double power that marks the originality of

*William
and
feudalism.*

CHAP. I. his political genius, for the system of government which he
 The Conqueror. devised was in fact the result of this double origin of his rule.
 1071-1085. It represented neither the purely feudal system of the Con-
 tinent nor the system of the older English royalty: more truly perhaps it may be said to have represented both. As the conqueror of England William developed the military organization of feudalism so far as was necessary for the secure possession of his conquests. The ground was already prepared for such an organization. We have watched the beginnings of English feudalism in the warriors, the "companions" or "thegns" who were personally attached to the king's war-band and received estates from the folk-land in reward for their personal services. In later times this feudal distribution of estates had greatly increased as the bulk of the nobles followed the king's example and bound their tenants to themselves by a similar process of subinfeudation. The pure freeholders on the other hand, the class which formed the basis of the original English society, had been gradually reduced in number, partly through imitation of the class above them, but more through the pressure of the Danish wars and the social disturbance consequent upon them which forced these freemen to seek protectors among the thegns at the cost of their independence. Even before the reign of William therefore feudalism was superseding the older freedom in England as it had already superseded it in Germany or France. But the tendency was quickened and intensified by the Conquest. The desperate and universal resistance of the country forced William to hold by the sword what the sword had won; and an army strong enough to crush at any moment a national revolt was needful for the preservation of his throne. Such an army could only be maintained by a vast confiscation of the soil, and the failure of the English risings cleared the ground for its establishment. The greater part of the higher nobility fell in battle or fled into exile, while the lower thegns either forfeited the whole of their lands or redeemed a portion by the surrender of the rest.

We see the completeness of the confiscation in the vast estates which William was enabled to grant to his more powerful followers. Two hundred manors in Kent with more than an equal number elsewhere rewarded the services of his brother Odo, and grants almost as large fell to William's counsellors Fitz-Osbern and Montgomery or to barons like the Mowbrays and the Clares. But the poorest soldier of fortune found his part in the spoil. The meanest Norman rose to wealth and power in this new dominion of his lord. Great or small, each manor thus granted was granted on condition of its holder's service at the King's call; a whole army was by this means encamped upon the soil; and William's summons could at any hour gather an overwhelming force around his standard.

Such a force however, effective as it was against the conquered English, was hardly less formidable to the Crown itself. When once it was established, William found himself fronted in his new realm by a feudal baronage, by the men whom he had so hardly bent to his will in Normandy, and who were as impatient of law, as jealous of the royal power, as eager for an unbridled military and judicial independence within their own manors, here as there. The political genius of the Conqueror was shown in his appreciation of this danger and in the skill with which he met it. Large as the estates he granted were, they were scattered over the country in such a way as to render union between the great landowners or the hereditary attachment of great areas of population to any one separate lord equally impossible. A yet wiser measure struck at the very root of feudalism. When the larger holdings were divided by their owners into smaller subtenancies, the under-tenants were bound by the same conditions of service to their lord as he to the Crown. "Hear, my lord," swore the vassal as kneeling bareheaded and without arms he placed his hands within those of his superior, "I become liege man of yours for life and limb and earthly regard; and I will keep faith and loyalty to

CHAP. I. you for life and death, God help me!" Then the kiss of
 The his lord invested him with land as a "fief" to descend to
 Conqueror. him and his heirs for ever. In other countries such a
 1071- vassal owed fealty to his lord against all foes, be they king
 1085. or no. By the usage however which William enacted in
 England each sub-tenant, in addition to his oath of fealty
 to his lord, swore fealty directly to the Crown, and loyalty
 to the King was thus established as the supreme and
 universal duty of all Englishmen.

William But the Conqueror's skill was shown not so much in
 and these inner checks upon feudalism as in the counter-
 England. balancing forces which he provided without it. He was
 not only the head of the great garrison that held England
 down, he was legal and elected King of the English people.
 If as Conqueror he covered the country with a new
 military organization, as the successor of Eadward he
 maintained the judicial and administrative organization
 of the old English realm. At the danger of a severance
 of the land between the greater nobles he struck a final
 blow by the abolition of the four great earldoms. The
 shire became the largest unit of local government, and in
 each shire the royal nomination of sheriffs for its adminis-
 tration concentrated the whole executive power in the
 King's hands. The old legal constitution of the country
 gave him the whole judicial power, and William was
 jealous to retain and heighten this. While he preserved
 the local courts of the hundred and the shire he strength-
 ened the jurisdiction of the King's Court, which seems
 even in the Confessor's day to have become more and
 more a court of highest appeal with a right to call up
 all cases from any lower jurisdiction to its bar. The
 control over the national revenue which had rested even
 in the most troubled times in the hands of the King was
 turned into a great financial power by the Conqueror's
 system. Over the whole face of the land a large part of
 the manors were burthened with special dues to the Crown:
 and it was for the purpose of ascertaining and recording

these that William sent into each county the commissioners
 whose enquiries are recorded in his Domesday Book. A
 jury empannelled in each hundred declared on oath the
 extent and nature of each estate, the names, number, and
 condition of its inhabitants, its value before and after the
 Conquest, and the sums due from it to the Crown. These,
 with the Danegeld or land-tax levied since the days of
 Æthelred, formed as yet the main financial resources of
 the Crown, and their exaction carried the royal authority
 in its most direct form home to every landowner. But to
 these were added a revenue drawn from the old Crown
 domain, now largely increased by the confiscations of the
 Conquest, the ever growing income from the judicial
 "fines" imposed by the King's judges in the King's courts,
 and the fees and redemptions paid to the Crown on the
 grant or renewal of every privilege or charter. A new
 source of revenue was found in the Jewish traders, many
 of whom followed William from Normandy, and who were
 glad to pay freely for the royal protection which enabled
 them to settle in their quarters or "Jewries" in all the
 principal towns of England.

William found a yet stronger check on his baronage in
 the organization of the Church. Its old dependence on
 the royal power was strictly enforced. Prelates were
 practically chosen by the King. Homage was exacted
 from bishop as from baron. No royal tenant could be ex-
 communicated save by the King's leave. No synod could
 legislate without his previous assent and subsequent con-
 firmation of its decrees. No papal letters could be
 received within the realm save by his permission. The
 King firmly repudiated the claims which were beginning
 to be put forward by the court of Rome. When Gregory
 VII. called on him to do fealty for his kingdom the King
 sternly refused to admit the claim. "Fealty I have never
 willed to do, nor will I do it now. I have never promised
 it, nor do I find that my predecessors did it to yours."
 William's reforms only tended to tighten this hold of the

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The
 Church.

CHAP. I. Crown on the clergy. Stigand was deposed; and the elevation of Lanfranc to the see of Canterbury was followed by the removal of most of the English prelates and by the appointment of Norman ecclesiastics in their place. The new archbishop did much to restore discipline, and William's own efforts were no doubt partly directed by a real desire for the religious improvement of his realm. But the foreign origin of the new prelates cut them off from the flocks they ruled and bound them firmly to the foreign throne; while their independent position was lessened by a change which seemed intended to preserve it. Ecclesiastical cases had till now been decided, like civil cases, in shire or hundred-court, where the bishop sat side by side with ealdorman or sheriff. They were now withdrawn from it to the separate court of the bishop. The change was pregnant with future trouble to the Crown; but for the moment it told mainly in removing the bishop from his traditional contact with the popular assembly and in effacing the memory of the original equality of the religious with the civil power.

William's death. In any struggle with feudalism a national king, secure of the support of the Church, and backed by the royal hoard at Winchester, stood in different case from the merely feudal sovereigns of the Continent. The difference of power was seen as soon as the Conquest was fairly over and the struggle which William had anticipated opened between the baronage and the Crown. The wisdom of his policy in the destruction of the great earldoms which had overshadowed the throne was shown in an attempt at their restoration made in 1075 by Roger, the son of his minister William Fitz-Osbern, and by the Breton, Ralf de Guader, whom the King had rewarded for his services at Senlac with the earldom of Norfolk. The rising was quickly suppressed, Roger thrown into prison, and Ralf driven over sea. The intrigues of the baronage soon found another leader in William's half-brother, the Bishop of Bayeux. Under pretence of aspiring by arms to the papacy Bishop Odo

collected money and men, but the treasure was at once seized by the royal officers and the Bishop arrested in the midst of the court. Even at the King's bidding no officer would venture to seize on a prelate of the Church; and it was with his own hands that William was forced to effect his arrest. The Conqueror was as successful against foes from without as against foes from within. The fear of the Danes, which had so long hung like a thunder-cloud over England, passed away before the host which William gathered in 1085 to meet a great armament assembled by King Cnut. A mutiny dispersed the Danish fleet, and the murder of its King removed all peril from the North. Scotland, already humbled by William's invasion, was bridled by the erection of a strong fortress at Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and after penetrating with his army to the heart of Wales the King commenced its systematic reduction by settling three of his great barons along its frontier. It was not till his closing years that William's unvarying success was troubled by a fresh outbreak of the Norman baronage under his son Robert and by an attack which he was forced to meet in 1087 from France. Its King mocked at the Conqueror's unwieldy bulk and at the sickness which bound him to his bed at Rouen. "King William has as long a lying-in," laughed Philip, "as a woman behind her curtains." "When I get up," William swore grimly, "I will go to mass in Philip's-land and bring a rich offering for my churching. I will offer a thousand candles for my fee. Flaming brands shall they be, and steel shall glitter over the fire they make." At harvest-tide town and hamlet flaring into ashes along the French border fulfilled the ruthless vow. But as the King rode down the steep street of Mantes which he had given to the flames his horse stumbled among the embers, and William was flung heavily against his saddle. He was borne home to Rouen to die. The sound of the minster bell woke him at dawn as he lay in the convent of St. Gervais, overlooking the city—it was the hour of prime

CHAP. I. —and stretching out his hands in prayer the King passed quietly away. Death itself took its colour from the savage solitude of his life. Priests and nobles fled as the last breath left him, and the Conqueror's body lay naked and lonely on the floor.

The Conqueror.
1071-1085.

CHAPTER II.

THE NORMAN KINGS.

1085—1154.

WITH the death of the Conqueror passed the terror which had held the barons in awe, while the severance of his dominions roused their hopes of successful resistance to the stern rule beneath which they had bowed. William bequeathed Normandy to his eldest son Robert; but William the Red, his second son, hastened with his father's ring to England where the influence of Lanfranc secured him the crown. The baronage seized the opportunity to rise in arms under pretext of supporting the claims of Robert, whose weakness of character gave full scope for the growth of feudal independence; and Bishop Odo, now freed from prison, placed himself at the head of the revolt. The new King was thrown almost wholly on the loyalty of his English subjects. But the national stamp which William had given to his kingship told at once. The English rallied to the royal standard; Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester, the one surviving Bishop of English blood, defeated the insurgents in the West; while the King, summoning the freemen of country and town to his host under pain of being branded as "nothing" or worthless, advanced with a large force against Rochester where the barons were concentrated. A plague which broke out among the garrison forced them to capitulate, and as the prisoners passed through the royal army cries of "gallows and cord" burst

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the Red.*

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from the English ranks. The failure of a later conspiracy whose aim was to set on the throne a kinsman of the royal house, Stephen of Albemarle, with the capture and imprisonment of its head, Robert Mowbray, the Earl of Northumberland, brought home at last to the baronage their helplessness in a strife with the King. The genius of the Conqueror had saved England from the danger of feudalism. But he had left as weighty a danger in the power which trod feudalism under foot. The power of the Crown was a purely personal power, restrained under the Conqueror by his own high sense of duty, but capable of becoming a pure despotism in the hands of his son. The nobles were at his feet, and the policy of his minister, Bishop Flambard of Durham, loaded their estates with feudal obligations. Each tenant was held as bound to appear if needful thrice a year at the royal court, to pay a heavy fine or rent on succession to his estate, to contribute aid in case of the King's capture in war or the knighthood of the King's eldest son or the marriage of his eldest daughter. An heir who was still a minor passed into the King's wardship, and all profit from his lands went during the period of wardship to the King. If the estate fell to an heiress, her hand was at the King's disposal and was generally sold by him to the highest bidder. These rights of "marriage" and "wardship" as well as the exaction of aids at the royal will poured wealth into the treasury while they impoverished and fettered the baronage. A fresh source of revenue was found in the Church. The same principles of feudal dependence were applied to its lands as to those of the nobles; and during the vacancy of a see or abbey its profits, like those of a minor, were swept into the royal hoard. William's profligacy and extravagance soon tempted him to abuse this resource, and so steadily did he refuse to appoint successors to prelates whom death removed that at the close of his reign one archbishoprick, four bishopricks, and eleven abbeys were found to be without pastors.

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Vile as was this system of extortion and misrule but a single voice was raised in protest against it. Lanfranc had been followed in his abbey at Bec by the most famous of his scholars, Anselm of Aosta, an Italian like himself. Friends as they were, no two men could be more strangely unlike. Anselm had grown to manhood in the quiet solitude of his mountain-valley, a tender-hearted poet-dreamer, with a soul pure as the Alpine snows above him, and an intelligence keen and clear as the mountain-air. The whole temper of the man was painted in a dream of his youth. It seemed to him as though heaven lay, a stately palace, amid the gleaming hill-peaks, while the women reaping in the corn-fields of the valley became harvest-maidens of its King. They reaped idly, and Anselm, grieved at their sloth, hastily climbed the mountain side to accuse them to their lord. As he reached the palace the King's voice called him to his feet and he poured forth his tale; then at the royal bidding bread of an unearthly whiteness was set before him, and he ate and was refreshed. The dream passed with the morning; but the sense of heaven's nearness to earth, the fervid loyalty to the service of his Lord, the tender restfulness and peace in the Divine presence which it reflected lived on in the life of Anselm. Wandering like other Italian scholars to Normandy, he became a monk under Lanfranc, and on his teacher's removal to higher duties succeeded him in the direction of the Abbey of Bec. No teacher has ever thrown a greater spirit of love into his toil. "Force your scholars to improve!" he burst out to another teacher who relied on blows and compulsion. "Did you ever see a craftsman fashion a fair image out of a golden plate by blows alone? Does he not now gently press it and strike it with his tools, now with wise art yet more gently raise and shape it? What do your scholars turn into under this ceaseless beating?" "They turn only brutal," was the reply. "You have bad luck," was the keen answer, "in a training that only turns men into beasts." The

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worst natures softened before this tenderness and patience. Even the Conqueror, so harsh and terrible to others, became another man, gracious and easy of speech, with Anselm. But amidst his absorbing cares as a teacher, the Prior of Bec found time for philosophical speculations to which we owe the scientific inquiries which built up the theology of the middle ages. His famous works were the first attempts of any Christian thinker to elicit the idea of God from the very nature of the human reason. His passion for abstruse thought robbed him of food and sleep. Sometimes he could hardly pray. Often the night was a long watch till he could seize his conception and write it on the wax tablets which lay beside him. But not even a fever of intense thought such as this could draw Anselm's heart from its passionate tenderness and love. Sick monks in the infirmary could relish no drink save the juice which his hand squeezed for them from the grape-bunch. In the later days of his archbishoprick a hare chased by the hounds took refuge under his horse, and his gentle voice grew loud as he forbade a huntsman to stir in the chase while the creature darted off again to the woods. Even the greed of lands for the Church to which so many religious men yielded found its characteristic rebuke as the battling lawyers in such a suit saw Anselm quietly close his eyes in court and go peacefully to sleep.

William
and
Anselm.

A sudden impulse of the Red King drew the abbot from these quiet studies into the storms of the world. The see of Canterbury had long been left without a Primate when a dangerous illness frightened the King into the promotion of Anselm. The Abbot, who happened at the time to be in England on the business of his house, was dragged to the royal couch and the cross forced into his hands. But William had no sooner recovered from his sickness than he found himself face to face with an opponent whose meek and loving temper rose into firmness and grandeur when it fronted the tyranny of the King. Much of the struggle between William and the Archbishop turned

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on questions such as the right of investiture, which have little bearing on our history, but the particular question at issue was of less importance than the fact of a contest at all. The boldness of Anselm's attitude not only broke the tradition of ecclesiastical servitude but infused through the nation at large a new spirit of independence. The real character of the strife appears in the Primate's answer when his remonstrances against the lawless exactions from the Church were met by a demand for a present on his own promotion, and his first offer of five hundred pounds was contemptuously refused. "Treat me as a free man," Anselm replied, "and I devote myself and all that I have to your service, but if you treat me as a slave you shall have neither me nor mine." A burst of the Red King's fury drove the Archbishop from court, and he finally decided to quit the country, but his example had not been lost, and the close of William's reign found a new spirit of freedom in England with which the greatest of the Conqueror's sons was glad to make terms. His exile however left William without a check. Supreme at home, he was full of ambition abroad. As a soldier the Red King was little inferior to his father. Normandy had been pledged to him by his brother Robert in exchange for a sum which enabled the Duke to march in the first Crusade for the delivery of the Holy Land, and a rebellion at Le Mans was subdued by the fierce energy with which William flung himself at the news of it into the first boat he found, and crossed the Channel in face of a storm. "Kings never drown," he replied contemptuously to the remonstrances of his followers. Homage was again wrested from Malcolm by a march to the Firth of Forth, and the subsequent death of that king threw Scotland into a disorder which enabled an army under Eadgar Ætheling to establish Edgar, the son of Margaret, as an English feudatory on the throne. In Wales William was less triumphant, and the terrible losses inflicted on the heavy Norman cavalry in the fastnesses of Snowdon forced him to fall back on

CHAP. II. the slower but wiser policy of the Conqueror. But triumph and defeat alike ended in a strange and tragical close. In 1100 the Red King was found dead by peasants in a glade of the New Forest, with the arrow either of a hunter or an assassin in his breast.

Henry the First.

Robert was at this moment on his return from the Holy Land, where his bravery had redeemed much of his earlier ill-fame, and the English crown was seized by his younger brother Henry in spite of the opposition of the baronage, who clung to the Duke of Normandy and the union of their estates on both sides the Channel under a single ruler. Their attitude threw Henry, as it had thrown Rufus, on the support of the English, and the two great measures which followed his coronation, his grant of a charter, and his marriage with Matilda, mark the new relation which this support brought about between the people and their King. Henry's Charter is important, not merely as a direct precedent for the Great Charter of John, but as the first limitation on the despotism established by the Conqueror and carried to such a height by his son. The "evil customs" by which the Red King had enslaved and plundered the Church were explicitly renounced in it, the unlimited demands made by both the Conqueror and his son on the baronage exchanged for customary fees, while the rights of the people itself, though recognized more vaguely, were not forgotten. The barons were held to do justice to their under-tenants and to renounce tyrannical exactions from them, the King promising to restore order and the "law of Eadward," the old constitution of the realm, with the changes which his father had introduced. His marriage gave a significance to these promises which the meanest English peasant could understand. Edith, or Matilda, was the daughter of King Malcolm of Scotland and of Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Ætheling. She had been brought up in the nunnery of Romsey by its abbess, her aunt Christina, and the veil which she had taken there formed an obstacle to her union with the King

which was only removed by the wisdom of Anselm. While Flambard, the embodiment of the Red King's despotism, was thrown into the Tower, the Archbishop's recall had been one of Henry's first acts after his accession. Matilda appeared before his court to tell her tale in words of passionate earnestness. She had been veiled in her childhood, she asserted, only to save her from the insults of the rude soldiery who infested the land, had flung the veil from her again and again, and had yielded at last to the unwomanly taunts, the actual blows of her aunt. "As often as I stood in her presence," the girl pleaded, "I wore the veil, trembling as I wore it with indignation and grief. But as soon as I could get out of her sight I used to snatch it from my head, fling it on the ground, and trample it under foot. That was the way, and none other, in which I was veiled." Anselm at once declared her free from conventual bonds, and the shout of the English multitude when he set the crown on Matilda's brow drowned the murmur of Churchman or of baron. The mockery of the Norman nobles, who nicknamed the King and his spouse Godric and Godgifu, was lost in the joy of the people at large. For the first time since the Conquest an English sovereign sat on the English throne. The blood of Cerdic and Ælfred was to blend itself with that of Rolf and the Conqueror. Henceforth it was impossible that the two peoples should remain parted from each other; so quick indeed was their union that the very name of Norman had passed away in half a century, and at the accession of Henry's grandson it was impossible to distinguish between the descendants of the conquerors and those of the conquered at Senlac.

Charter and marriage roused an enthusiasm among his subjects which enabled Henry to defy the claims of his brother and the disaffection of his nobles. Early in 1101 Robert landed at Portsmouth to win the crown in arms. The great barons with hardly an exception stood aloof from the King. But the Norman Duke found

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CHAP. II. himself face to face with an English army which gathered at Anselm's summons round Henry's standard. The temper of the English had rallied from the panic of Senlac. The soldiers who came to fight for their King "nowise feared the Normans." As Henry rode along their lines showing them how to keep firm their shield-wall against the lances of Robert's knighthood, he was met with shouts for battle. But King and Duke alike shrank from a contest in which the victory of either side would have undone the Conqueror's work. The one saw his effort was hopeless, the other was only anxious to remove his rival from the realm, and by a peace which the Count of Meulan negotiated Robert recognized Henry as King of England while Henry gave up his fief in the Cotentin to his brother the Duke. Robert's retreat left Henry free to deal sternly with the barons who had forsaken him. Robert de Lacy was stripped of his manors in Yorkshire; Robert Malet was driven from his lands in Suffolk; Ivo of Grantmesnil lost his vast estates and went to the Holy Land as a pilgrim. But greater even than these was Robert of Belesme, the son of Roger of Montgomery, who held in England the earldoms of Shrewsbury and Arundel, while in Normandy he was Count of Ponthieu and Alençon. Robert stood at the head of the baronage in wealth and power: and his summons to the King's Court to answer for his refusal of aid to the King was answered by a haughty defiance. But again the Norman baronage had to feel the strength which English loyalty gave to the Crown. Sixty thousand Englishmen followed Henry to the attack of Robert's strongholds along the Welsh border. It was in vain that the nobles about the King, conscious that Robert's fall left them helpless in Henry's hands, strove to bring about a peace. The English soldiers shouted "Heed not these traitors, our lord King Henry," and with the people at his back the King stood firm. Only an early surrender saved Robert's life. He was suffered to retire to his estates in Normandy, but his English lands were

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confiscated to the Crown. "Rejoice, King Henry," shouted the English soldiers, "for you began to be a free King on that day when you conquered Robert of Belesme and drove him from the land." Master of his own realm and enriched by the confiscated lands of the ruined barons Henry crossed into Normandy, where the misgovernment of the Duke had alienated the clergy and tradesfolk, and where the outrages of nobles like Robert of Belesme forced the more peaceful classes to call the King to their aid. In 1106 his forces met those of his brother on the field of Tenchebray, and a decisive English victory on Norman soil avenged the shame of Hastings. The conquered duchy became a dependency of the English crown, and Henry's energies were frittered away through a quarter of a century in crushing its revolts, the hostility of the French, and the efforts of his nephew William the son of Robert, to regain the crown which his father had lost.

With the victory of Tenchebray Henry was free to enter on that work of administration which was to make his reign memorable in our history. Successful as his wars had been he was in heart no warrior but a statesman, and his greatness showed itself less in the field than in the council chamber. His outer bearing like his inner temper stood in marked contrast to that of his father. Well read, accomplished, easy and fluent of speech, the lord of a harem of mistresses, the centre of a gay court where poet and jongleur found a home, Henry remained cool, self-possessed, clear-sighted, hard, methodical, loveless himself, and neither seeking nor desiring his people's love, but wringing from them their gratitude and regard by sheer dint of good government. His work of order was necessarily a costly work; and the steady pressure of his taxation, a pressure made the harder by local famines and plagues during his reign, has left traces of the grumbling it roused in the pages of the English Chronicle. But even the Chronicler is forced to own amidst his grumbings that Henry "was a good man, and great was the awe of him."

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Henry's
rule.

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He had little of his father's creative genius, of that far-reaching originality by which the Conqueror stamped himself and his will on the very fabric of our history. But he had the passion for order, the love of justice, the faculty of organization, the power of steady and unwavering rule, which was needed to complete the Conqueror's work. His aim was peace, and the title of the Peace-loving King which was given him at his death showed with what a steadiness and constancy he carried out his aim. In Normandy indeed his work was ever and anon undone by outbreaks of its baronage, outbreaks sternly repressed only that the work might be patiently and calmly taken up again where it had been broken off. But in England his will was carried out with a perfect success. For more than a quarter of a century the land had rest. Without, the Scots were held in friendship, the Welsh were bridled by a steady and well-planned scheme of gradual conquest. Within, the licence of the baronage was held sternly down, and justice secured for all. "He governed with a strong hand," says Orderic, but the strong hand was the hand of a king, not of a tyrant. "Great was the awe of him," writes the annalist of Peterborough. "No man durst ill-do to another in his days. Peace he made for man and beast." Pitiless as were the blows he aimed at the nobles who withstood him, they were blows which his English subjects felt to be struck in their cause. "While he mastered by policy the foremost counts and lords and the boldest tyrants, he ever cherished and protected peaceful men and men of religion and men of the middle class." What impressed observers most was the unswerving, changeless temper of his rule. The stern justice, the terrible punishments he inflicted on all who broke his laws, were parts of a fixed system which differed widely from the capricious severity of a mere despot. Hardly less impressive was his unvarying success. Heavy as were the blows which destiny levelled at him, Henry bore and rose unconquered from all. To the end of his life

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the proudest barons lay bound and blinded in his prison. His hoard grew greater and greater. Normandy, toss as she might, lay helpless at his feet to the last. In England it was only after his death that men dared mutter what evil things they had thought of Henry the Peace-lover, or censure the pitilessness, the greed, and the lust which had blurred the wisdom and splendour of his rule.

His vigorous administration carried out into detail the system of government which the Conqueror had sketched. The vast estates which had fallen to the crown through revolt and forfeiture were granted out to new men dependent on royal favour. On the ruins of the great feudatories whom he had crushed Henry built up a class of lesser nobles, whom the older barons of the Conquest looked down on in scorn, but who were strong enough to form a counterpoise to their influence while they furnished the Crown with a class of useful administrators whom Henry employed as his sheriffs and judges. A new organization of justice and finance bound the kingdom more tightly together in Henry's grasp. The Clerks of the Royal Chapel were formed into a body of secretaries or royal ministers, whose head bore the title of Chancellor. Above them stood the Justiciar, or Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, who in the frequent absence of the King acted as Regent of the realm, and whose staff, selected from the barons connected with the royal household, were formed into a Supreme Court of the realm. The King's Court, as this was called, permanently represented the whole court of royal vassals which had hitherto been summoned thrice in the year. As the royal council, it revised and registered laws, and its "counsel and consent," though merely formal, preserved the principle of the older popular legislation. As a court of justice it formed the highest court of appeal: it could call up any suit from a lower tribunal on the application of a suitor, while the union of several sheriffdoms under some of its members connected it closely with the local courts. As a financial

Henry's
Adminis-
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body, its chief work lay in the assessment and collection of the revenue. In this capacity it took the name of the Court of Exchequer from the chequered table, much like a chess-board, at which it sat and on which accounts were rendered. In their financial capacity its justices became "barons of the Exchequer." Twice every year the sheriff of each county appeared before these barons and rendered the sum of the fixed rent from royal domains, the Danegeld or land tax, the fines of the local courts, the feudal aids from the baronial estates, which formed the chief part of the royal revenue. Local disputes respecting these payments or the assessment of the town-rents were settled by a detachment of barons from the court who made the circuit of the shires, and whose fiscal visitations led to the judicial visitations, the "judges' circuits," which still form so marked a feature in our legal system.

The
Angevin
Marriage.

Measures such as these changed the whole temper of the Norman rule. It remained a despotism, but from this moment it was a despotism regulated and held in check by the forms of administrative routine. Heavy as was the taxation under Henry the First, terrible as was the suffering throughout his reign from famine and plague, the peace and order which his government secured through thirty years won a rest for the land in which conqueror and conquered blended into a single people and in which this people slowly moved forward to a new freedom. But while England thus rested in peace a terrible blow broke the fortunes of her King. In 1120 his son, William the "Ætheling," with a crowd of nobles accompanied Henry on his return from Normandy; but the White ship in which he embarked lingered behind the rest of the royal fleet till the guards of the King's treasure pressed its departure. It had hardly cleared the harbour when the ship's side struck on a rock, and in an instant it sank beneath the waves. One terrible cry ringing through the silence of the night, was heard by the royal fleet; but it was not till the morning that the fatal news reached the

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King. Stern as he was, Henry fell senseless to the ground, and rose never to smile again. He had no other son, and the circle of his foreign foes closed round him the more fiercely that William, the son of his captive brother Robert, was now his natural heir. Henry hated William while he loved his own daughter Maud, who had been married to the Emperor Henry the Fifth, but who had been restored by his death to her father's court. The succession of a woman was new in English history; it was strange to a feudal baronage. But when all hope of issue from a second wife whom he wedded was over Henry forced priests and nobles to swear allegiance to Maud as their future mistress, and affianced her to Geoffry the Handsome, the son of the one foe whom he dreaded, Count Fulk of Anjou.

Anjou.

The marriage of Matilda was but a step in the wonderful history by which the descendants of a Breton woodman became masters not of Anjou only, but of Touraine, Maine, and Poitou, of Gascony and Auvergne, of Aquitaine and Normandy, and sovereigns at last of the great realm which Normandy had won. The legend of the father of their races carries us back to the times of our own Ælfred, when the Danes were ravaging along Loire as they ravaged along Thames. In the heart of the Breton border, in the debatable land between France and Brittany, dwelt Tortulf the Forester, half-brigand, half-hunter as the gloomy days went, living in free outlaw-fashion in the woods about Rennes. Tortulf had learned in his rough forest school "how to strike the foe, to sleep on the bare ground, to bear hunger and toil, summer's heat and winter's frost, how to fear nothing save ill-fame." Following King Charles the Bald in his struggle with the Danes, the woodman won broad lands along Loire, and his son Ingelger, who had swept the Northmen from Touraine and the land to the west, which they had burned and wasted into a vast solitude, became the first Count of Anjou. But the tale of Tortulf and Ingelger is a mere creation of some twelfth century jongleur. The earliest Count whom history recognizes is

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Fulk the Red. Fulk attached himself to the Dukes of France who were now drawing nearer to the throne, and in 888 received from them in guerdon the western portion of Anjou which lay across the Mayenne. The story of his son is a story of peace, breaking like a quiet idyll the war-storms of his house. Alone of his race Fulk the Good waged no wars: his delight was to sit in the choir of Tours and to be called "Canon." One Martinmas eve Fulk was singing there in clerkly guise when the French King, Lewis d'Outremer, entered the church. "He sings like a priest," laughed the King as his nobles pointed mockingly to the figure of the Count-Canon. But Fulk was ready with his reply. "Know, my lord," wrote the Count of Anjou, "that a King unlearned is a crowned ass." Fulk was in fact no priest, but a busy ruler, governing, enforcing peace, and carrying justice to every corner of the wasted land. To him alone of his race men gave the title of "the Good."

*Fulk the
Black.*

Hampered by revolt, himself in character little more than a bold, dashing soldier, Fulk's son, Geoffry Greygown, sank almost into a vassal of his powerful neighbours, the Counts of Blois and Champagne. But this vassalage was roughly shaken off by his successor. Fulk Nerra, Fulk the Black, is the greatest of the Angevins, the first in whom we can trace that marked type of character which their house was to preserve through two hundred years. He was without natural affection. In his youth he burnt a wife at the stake, and legend told how he led her to her doom decked out in his gayest attire. In his old age he waged his bitterest war against his son, and exacted from him when vanquished a humiliation which men reserved for the deadliest of their foes. "You are conquered, you are conquered!" shouted the old man in fierce exultation, as Geoffry, bridled and saddled like a beast of burden, crawled for pardon to his father's feet. In Fulk first appeared that low type of superstition which startled even superstitious ages in the early Plantagenets.

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Robber as he was of Church lands, and contemptuous of ecclesiastical censures, the fear of the end of the world drove Fulk to the Holy Sepulchre. Barefoot and with the strokes of the scourge falling heavily on his shoulders, the Count had himself dragged by a halter through the streets of Jerusalem, and courted the doom of martyrdom by his wild outcries of penitence. He rewarded the fidelity of Herbert of Le Mans, whose aid saved him from utter ruin, by entrapping him into captivity and robbing him of his lands. He secured the terrified friendship of the French King by despatching twelve assassins to cut down before his eyes the minister who had troubled it. Familiar as the age was with treason and rapine and blood, it recoiled from the cool cynicism of his crimes, and believed the wrath of Heaven to have been revealed against the union of the worst forms of evil in Fulk the Black. But neither the wrath of Heaven nor the curses of men broke with a single mishap the fifty years of his success.

At his accession in 987 Anjou was the least important of the greater provinces of France. At his death in 1040 it stood, if not in extent, at least in real power, first among them all. Cool-headed, clear-sighted, quick to resolve, quicker to strike, Fulk's career was one long series of victories over all his rivals. He was a consummate general, and he had the gift of personal bravery, which was denied to some of his greatest descendants. There was a moment in the first of his battles when the day seemed lost for Anjou; a feigned retreat of the Bretons drew the Angevin horsemen into a line of hidden pitfalls, and the Count himself was flung heavily to the ground. Dragged from the medley of men and horses, he swept down almost singly on the foe "as a storm-wind" (so rang the pæan of the Angevins) "sweeps down on the thick corn-rows," and the field was won. But to these qualities of the warrior he added a power of political organization, a capacity for far-reaching combinations, a faculty of statesmanship, which became the heritage of his race, and

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lifted them as high above the intellectual level of the rulers of their time as their shameless wickedness degraded them below the level of man. His overthrow of Brittany on the field of Conquereux was followed by the gradual absorption of Southern Touraine; a victory at Pontlevoi crushed the rival house of Blois; the seizure of Saumur completed his conquests in the south, while Northern Touraine was won bit by bit till only Tours resisted the Angevin. The treacherous seizure of its Count, Herbert Wakedog, left Maine at his mercy.

His work of conquest was completed by his son. Geoffrey Martel wrested Tours from the Count of Blois, and by the seizure of Le Mans brought his border to the Norman frontier. Here however his advance was checked by the genius of William the Conqueror, and with his death the greatness of Anjou came for a while to an end. Stripped of Maine by the Normans and broken by dissensions within, the weak and profligate rule of Fulk Rechin left Anjou powerless. But in 1109 it woke to fresh energy with the accession of his son, Fulk of Jerusalem. Now urging the turbulent Norman nobles to revolt, now supporting Robert's son, William, in his strife with his uncle, offering himself throughout as the loyal supporter of the French kingdom which was now hemmed in on almost every side by the forces of the English king and of his allies the Counts of Blois and Champagne, Fulk was the one enemy whom Henry the First really feared. It was to disarm his restless hostility that the King gave the hand of Matilda to Geoffrey the Handsome. But the hatred between Norman and Angevin had been too bitter to make such a marriage popular, and the secrecy with which it was brought about was held by the barons to free them from the oath they had previously sworn. As no baron if he was sonless could give a husband to his daughter save with his lord's consent, the nobles held by a strained analogy that their own assent was needful to the marriage of Maud. Henry found a

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more pressing danger in the greed of her husband Geoffrey, whose habit of wearing the common broom of Anjou, the *planta genista*, in his helmet gave him the title of Plantagenet. His claims ended at last in intrigues with the Norman nobles, and Henry hurried to the border to meet an Angevin invasion; but the plot broke down at his presence, the Angevins retired, and at the close of 1135 the old King withdrew to the Forest of Lyons to die.

"God give him," wrote the Archbishop of Rouen from Henry's death-bed, "the peace he loved." With him indeed closed the long peace of the Norman rule. An outburst of anarchy followed on the news of his departure, and in the midst of the turmoil Earl Stephen, his nephew, appeared at the gates of London. Stephen was a son of the Conqueror's daughter, Adela, who had married a Count of Blois; he had been brought up at the English court, had been made Count of Mortain by Henry, had become Count of Boulogne by his marriage, and as head of the Norman baronage had been the first to pledge himself to support Matilda's succession. But his own claim as nearest male heir of the Conqueror's blood (for his cousin, the son of Robert, had fallen some years before in Flanders) was supported by his personal popularity; mere swordsman as he was, his good-humour, his generosity, his very prodigality made Stephen a favourite with all. No noble however had as yet ventured to join him nor had any town opened its gates when London poured out to meet him with uproarious welcome. Neither baron nor prelate was present to constitute a National Council, but the great city did not hesitate to take their place. The voice of her citizens had long been accepted as representative of the popular assent in the election of a king; but it marks the progress of English independence under Henry that London now claimed of itself the right of election. Undismayed by the absence of the hereditary counsellors of the crown its "Aldermen and wise folk gathered together the folk-moot, and these providing at their own will for the good

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of the realm unanimously resolved to choose a king." The solemn deliberation ended in the choice of Stephen, the citizens swore to defend the King with money and blood, Stephen swore to apply his whole strength to the pacification and good government of the realm. It was in fact the new union of conquered and conquerors into a single England that did Stephen's work. The succession of Maud meant the rule of Geoffry of Anjou, and to Norman as to Englishman the rule of the Angevin was a foreign rule. The welcome Stephen won at London and Winchester, his seizure of the royal treasure, the adhesion of the Justiciar Bishop Roger to his cause, the reluctant consent of the Archbishop, the hopelessness of aid from Anjou where Geoffry was at this moment pressed by revolt, the need above all of some king to meet the outbreak of anarchy which followed Henry's death, secured Stephen the voice of the baronage. He was crowned at Christmas-tide; and soon joined by Robert Earl of Gloucester, a bastard son of Henry and the chief of his nobles; while the issue of a charter from Oxford in 1136, a charter which renewed the dead King's pledge of good government, promised another Henry to the realm. The charter surrendered all forests made in the last reign as a sop to the nobles, it conciliated the Church by granting freedom of election and renouncing all right to the profits of vacant churches, it won the people by a pledge to abolish the tax of Danegeld.

Battle
of the
Standard.

The king's first two years were years of success and prosperity. Two risings of barons in the east and west were easily put down, and in 1137 Stephen passed into Normandy and secured the Duchy against an attack from Anjou. But already the elements of trouble were gathering round him. Stephen was a mere soldier, with few kingly qualities save that of a soldier's bravery; and the realm soon began to slip from his grasp. He turned against himself the jealous dread of foreigners to which he owed his accession by surrounding himself with hired knights from Flanders; he drained the treasury by

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creating new earls endowed with pensions from it, and recruited his means by base coinage. His consciousness of the gathering storm only drove Stephen to bind his friends to him by suffering them to fortify castles and to renew the feudal tyranny which Henry had struck down. But the long reign of the dead king had left the Crown so strong that even yet Stephen could hold his own. A plot which Robert of Gloucester had been weaving from the outset of his reign came indeed to a head in 1138, and the Earl's revolt stripped Stephen of Caen and half Normandy. But when his partizans in England rose in the south and the west and the King of Scots, whose friendship Stephen had bought in the opening of his reign by the cession of Carlisle, poured over the northern border, the nation stood firmly by the King. Stephen himself marched on the western rebels and soon left them few strongholds save Bristol. His people fought for him in the north. The pillage and cruelties of the wild tribes of Galloway and the Highlands roused the spirit of the Yorkshiremen. Baron and freeman gathered at York round Archbishop Thurstan and marched to the field of Northallerton to await the foe. The sacred banners of St. Cuthbert of Durham, St. Peter of York, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfred of Ripon hung from a pole fixed in a four-wheeled car which stood in the centre of the host. The first onset of David's host was a terrible one. "I who wear no armour," shouted the chief of the Galwegians, "will go as far this day as any one with breastplate of mail;" his men charged with wild shout of "Albin, Albin," and were followed by the Norman knighthood of the Lowlands. But their repulse was complete; the fierce hordes dashed in vain against the close English ranks around the Standard, and the whole army fled in confusion to Carlisle.

Weak indeed as Stephen was, the administrative organization of Henry still did its work. Roger remained justiciar, his son was chancellor, his nephew Nigel, the Bishop of Ely, was treasurer. Finance and justice were thus concentrated

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in the hands of a single family which preserved amidst the deepening misrule something of the old order and rule, and which stood at the head of the "new men," whom Henry had raised into importance and made the instruments of his will. These new men were still weak by the side of the older nobles; and conscious of the jealousy and ill-will with which they were regarded they followed in self-defence the example which the barons were setting in building and fortifying castles on their domains. Roger and his house, the objects from their official position of a deeper grudge than any, were carried away by the panic. The justiciar and his son fortified their castles, and it was only with a strong force at their back that the prelates appeared at court. Their attitude was one to rouse Stephen's jealousy, and the news of Matilda's purpose of invasion lent strength to the doubts which the nobles cast on their fidelity. All the weak violence of the King's temper suddenly broke out. He seized Roger the Chancellor and the Bishop of Lincoln when they appeared at Oxford in June, 1139, and forced them to surrender their strongholds. Shame broke the justiciar's heart; he died at the close of the year, and his nephew Nigel of Ely was driven from the realm. But the fall of this house shattered the whole system of government. The King's court and the Exchequer ceased to work at a moment when the landing of Earl Robert and the Empress Matilda set Stephen face to face with a danger greater than he had yet encountered, while the clergy alienated by the arrest of the Bishops and the disregard of their protests, stood angrily aloof.

Civil War.

The three bases of Henry's system of government, the subjection of the baronage to the law, the good-will of the Church, and the organization of justice and finance, were now utterly ruined; and for the seventeen years which passed from this hour to the Treaty of Wallingford England was given up to the miseries of civil war. The country was divided between the adherents

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of the two rivals, the West supporting Matilda, London and the East Stephen. A defeat at Lincoln in 1141 left the latter a captive in the hands of his enemies, while Matilda was received throughout the land as its "Lady." But the disdain with which she repulsed the claim of London to the enjoyment of its older privileges called its burghers to arms; her resolve to hold Stephen a prisoner roused his party again to life, and she was driven to Oxford to be besieged there in 1142 by Stephen himself, who had obtained his release in exchange for Earl Robert after the capture of the Earl in a battle at Devizes. She escaped from the castle, but with the death of Robert her struggle became a hopeless one, and in 1146 she withdrew to Normandy. The war was now a mere chaos of pillage and bloodshed. The royal power came to an end. The royal courts were suspended, for not a baron or bishop would come at the King's call. The bishops met in council to protest, but their protests and excommunications fell on deafened ears. For the first and last time in her history England was in the hands of the baronage, and their outrages showed from what horrors the stern rule of the Norman kings had saved her. Castles sprang up everywhere. "They filled the land with castles," says the terrible annalist of the time. "They greatly oppressed the wretched people by making them work at these castles, and when they were finished they filled them with devils and armed men." In each of these robber-holds a petty tyrant ruled like a king. The strife for the Crown had broken into a medley of feuds between baron and baron, for none could brook an equal or a superior in his fellow. "They fought among themselves with deadly hatred, they spoiled the fairest lands with fire and rapine; in what had been the most fertile of counties they destroyed almost all the provision of bread." For fight as they might with one another, all were at one in the plunder of the land. Towns were put to ransom. Villages were sacked and burned. All who were deemed to have goods, whether men or women, were carried off and

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flung into dungeons and tortured till they yielded up their wealth. No ghastlier picture of a nation's misery has ever been painted than that which closes the English Chronicle whose last accents falter out amidst the horrors of the time. "They hanged up men by their feet and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet. They put knotted strings about men's heads, and writhed them till they went to the brain. They put men into prisons where adders and snakes and toads were crawling, and so they tormented them. Some they put into a chest short and narrow and not deep and that had sharp stones within, and forced men therein so that they broke all their limbs. In many of the castles were hateful and grim things called rachenteges, which two or three men had enough to do to carry. It was thus made: it was fastened to a beam and had a sharp iron to go about a man's neck and throat, so that he might noways sit, or lie, or sleep, but he bore all the iron. Many thousands they starved with hunger."

*Religious
Revival.*

It was only after years of this feudal anarchy that England was rescued from it by the efforts of the Church. The political influence of the Church had been greatly lessened by the Conquest: for pious, learned, and energetic as the bulk of the Conqueror's bishops were, they were not Englishmen. Till the reign of Henry the First no Englishman occupied an English see. This severance of the higher clergy from the lower priesthood and from the people went far to paralyze the constitutional influence of the Church. Anselm stood alone against Rufus, and when Anselm was gone no voice of ecclesiastical freedom broke the silence of the reign of Henry the First. But at the close of Henry's reign and throughout the reign of Stephen England was stirred by the first of those great religious movements which it was to experience afterwards in the preaching of the Friars, the Lollardism of Wyclif, the Reformation, the Puritan enthusiasm, and the mission work of the Wesleys. Everywhere in town and country

men banded themselves together for prayer: hermits flocked to the woods: noble and churl welcomed the austere Cistercians, a reformed offshoot of the Benedictine order, as they spread over the moors and forests of the North. A new spirit of devotion woke the slumbers of the religious houses, and penetrated alike to the home of the noble and the trader. London took its full share in the revival. The city was proud of its religion, its thirteen conventual and more than a hundred parochial churches. The new impulse changed its very aspect. In the midst of the city Bishop Richard busied himself with the vast cathedral church of St. Paul which Bishop Maurice had begun; barges came up the river with stone from Caen for the great arches that moved the popular wonder, while street and lane were being levelled to make room for its famous churchyard. Rahere, a minstrel at Henry's court, raised the Priory of Saint Bartholomew beside Smithfield. Alfune built St. Giles's at Cripplegate. The old English Cnichtenagild surrendered their soke of Aldgate as a site for the new priory of the Holy Trinity. The tale of this house paints admirably the temper of the citizens at the time. Its founder, Prior Norman, built church and cloister and bought books and vestments in so liberal a fashion that no money remained to buy bread. The canons were at their last gasp when the city-folk, looking into the refectory as they passed round the cloister in their usual Sunday procession, saw the tables laid but not a single loaf on them. "Here is a fine set out," said the citizens; "but where is the bread to come from?" The women who were present vowed each to bring a loaf every Sunday, and there was soon bread enough and to spare for the priory and its priests.

We see the strength of the new movement in the new class of ecclesiastics whom it forced on to the stage. Men like Archbishop Theobald drew whatever influence they wielded from a belief in their holiness of life and unselfishness of aim. The paralysis of the Church ceased as the

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*Thomas
of
London.*

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new impulse bound prelaty and people together, and at the moment we have reached its power was found strong enough to wrest England out of the chaos of feudal misrule. In the early part of Stephen's reign his brother Henry, the Bishop of Winchester, who had been appointed in 1139 Papal Legate for the realm, had striven to supply the absence of any royal or national authority by convening synods of bishops, and by asserting the moral right of the Church to declare sovereigns unworthy of the throne. The compact between king and people which became a part of constitutional law in the Charter of Henry had gathered new force in the Charter of Stephen, but its legitimate consequence in the responsibility of the crown for the execution of the compact was first drawn out by these ecclesiastical councils. From their alternate depositions of Stephen and Matilda flowed the after depositions of Edward and Richard, and the solemn act by which the succession was changed in the case of James. Extravagant and unauthorized as their expression of it may appear, they expressed the right of a nation to good government. Henry of Winchester however, "half monk, half soldier," as he was called, possessed too little religious influence to wield a really spiritual power, and it was only at the close of Stephen's reign that the nation really found a moral leader in Theobald, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Theobald's ablest agent and adviser was Thomas, the son of Gilbert Beket, a leading citizen and, it is said, Portreeve of London, the site of whose house is still marked by the Mercers' chapel in Cheapside. His mother Rohese was a type of the devout woman of her day; she weighed her boy every year on his birthday against money, clothes, and provisions which she gave to the poor. Thomas grew up amidst the Norman barons and clerks who frequented his father's house with a genial freedom of character tempered by the Norman refinement; he passed from the school of Merton to the University of Paris, and returned to fling himself into the life of the young nobles of the time. Tall,

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*Treaty of
Walling-
ford.*

handsome, bright-eyed, ready of wit and speech, his firmness of temper showed itself in his very sports; to rescue his hawk which had fallen into the water he once plunged into a millrace and was all but crushed by the wheel. The loss of his father's wealth drove him to the court of Archbishop Theobald, and he soon became the Primate's confidant in his plans for the rescue of England.

The natural influence which the Primate would have exerted was long held in suspense by the superior position of Bishop Henry of Winchester as Papal Legate; but this office ceased with the Pope who granted it, and when in 1150 it was transferred to the Archbishop himself Theobald soon made his weight felt. The long disorder of the realm was producing its natural reaction in exhaustion and disgust, as well as in a general craving for return to the line of hereditary succession whose breaking seemed the cause of the nation's woes. But the growth of their son Henry to manhood set naturally aside the pretensions both of Count Geoffrey and Matilda. Young as he was Henry already showed the cool long-sighted temper which was to be his characteristic on the throne. Foiled in an early attempt to grasp the crown, he looked quietly on at the disorder which was doing his work till the death of his father at the close of 1151 left him master of Normandy and Anjou. In the spring of the following year his marriage with its duchess, Eleanor of Poitou, added Aquitaine to his dominions. Stephen saw the gathering storm, and strove to meet it. He called on the bishops and baronage to secure the succession of his son Eustace by consenting to his association with him in the kingdom. But the moment was now come for Theobald to play his part. He was already negotiating through Thomas of London with Henry and the Pope; he met Stephen's plans by a refusal to swear fealty to his son, and the bishops, in spite of Stephen's threats, went with their head. The blow was soon followed by a harder one. Thomas, as Theobald's agent, invited Henry to appear in England, and though the Duke disappointed his supporters' hopes by the

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scanty number of men he brought with him in 1153, his weakness proved in the end a source of strength. It was not to foreigners, men said, that Henry owed his success but to the arms of Englishmen. An English army gathered round him, and as the hosts of Stephen and the Duke drew together a battle seemed near which would decide the fate of the realm. But Theobald who was now firmly supported by the greater barons again interfered and forced the rivals to an agreement. To the excited partizans of the house of Anjou it seemed as if the nobles were simply playing their own game in the proposed settlement and striving to preserve their power by a balance of masters. The suspicion was probably groundless, but all fear vanished with the death of Eustace, who rode off from his father's camp, maddened with the ruin of his hopes, to die in August, smitten, as men believed, by the hand of God for his plunder of abbeys. The ground was now clear, and in November the Treaty of Wallingford abolished the evils of the long anarchy. The castles were to be razed, the crown lands resumed, the foreign mercenaries banished from the country, and sheriffs appointed to restore order. Stephen was recognized as King, and in turn recognized Henry as his heir. The Duke received at Oxford the fealty of the barons, and passed into Normandy in the spring of 1154. The work of reformation had already begun. Stephen resented indeed the pressure which Henry put on him to enforce the destruction of the castles built during the anarchy; but Stephen's resistance was but the pettish outbreak of a ruined man. He was in fact fast drawing to the grave; and on his death in October 1154 Henry returned to take the crown without a blow.

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CHAPTER III.

HENRY THE SECOND.

1154—1189.

YOUNG as he was, and he had reached but his twenty-first year when he returned to England as its King, Henry mounted the throne with a purpose of government which his reign carried steadily out. His practical, serviceable frame suited the hardest worker of his time. There was something in his build and look, in the square stout form, the fiery face, the close-cropped hair, the prominent eyes, the bull neck, the coarse strong hands, the bowed legs, that marked out the keen, stirring, coarse-fibred man of business. "He never sits down," said one who observed him closely; "he is always on his legs from morning till night." Orderly in business, careless of appearance, sparing in diet, never resting or giving his servants rest, chatty, inquisitive, endowed with a singular charm of address and strength of memory, obstinate in love or hatred, a fair scholar, a great hunter, his general air that of a rough, passionate, busy man, Henry's personal character told directly on the character of his reign. His accession marks the period of amalgamation when neighbourhood and traffic and inter-marriage drew Englishmen and Normans into a single people. A national feeling was thus springing up before which the barriers of the older feudalism were to be swept away. Henry had even less reverence for the feudal past than the men of his day: he was indeed utterly without the imagination and reverence which enable men to

*Henry
Fitz-
Empress.*

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 Henry the impatience of the obstacles thrown in the way of his
 Second. reforms by the older constitution of the realm, nor could
 1154- he understand other men's reluctance to purchase un-
 1189. doubted improvements by the sacrifice of customs and
 traditions of bygone days. Without any theoretical hos-
 tility to the co-ordinate powers of the state, it seemed to
 him a perfectly reasonable and natural course to trample
 either baronage or Church under foot to gain his end of
 good government. He saw clearly that the remedy for
 such anarchy as England had endured under Stephen lay
 in the establishment of a kingly rule unembarrassed by
 any privileges of order or class, administered by royal
 servants, and in whose public administration the nobles
 acted simply as delegates of the sovereign. His work was
 to lie in the organization of judicial and administrative
 reforms which realized this idea. But of the currents of
 thought and feeling which were tending in the same
 direction he knew nothing. What he did for the moral
 and social impulses which were telling on men about him
 was simply to let them alone. Religion grew more and
 more identified with patriotism under the eyes of a King
 who whispered, and scribbled, and looked at picture-books
 during mass, who never confessed, and cursed God in wild
 frenzies of blasphemy. Great peoples formed themselves
 on both sides of the sea round a sovereign who bent the
 whole force of his mind to hold together an Empire which
 the growth of nationality must inevitably destroy. There
 is throughout a tragic grandeur in the irony of Henry's
 position, that of a Sforza of the fifteenth century set in the
 midst of the twelfth, building up by patience and policy
 and craft a dominion alien to the deepest sympathies of
 his age and fated to be swept away in the end by popular
 forces to whose existence his very cleverness and activity
 blinded him. But whether by the anti-national temper of
 his general system or by the administrative reforms of
 his English rule his policy did more than that of all

his predecessors to prepare England for the unity and
 freedom which the fall of his house was to reveal.

He had been placed on the throne, as we have seen, by
 the Church. His first work was to repair the evils which
 England had endured till his accession by the restoration
 of the system of Henry the First; and it was with the aid
 and counsel of Theobald that the foreign marauders were
 driven from the realm, the new castles demolished in spite
 of the opposition of the baronage, the King's Court and
 Exchequer restored. Age and infirmity however warned
 the Primate to retire from the post of minister, and his
 power fell into the younger and more vigorous hands of
 Thomas Beket, who had long acted as his confidential
 adviser and was now made Chancellor. Thomas won the
 personal favour of the King. The two young men had, in
 Theobald's words, "but one heart and mind;" Henry
 jested in the Chancellor's hall, or tore his cloak from his
 shoulders in rough horse-play as they rode through the
 streets. He loaded his favourite with riches and honours,
 but there is no ground for thinking that Thomas in any
 degree influenced his system of rule. Henry's policy
 seems for good or evil to have been throughout his own.
 His work of reorganization went steadily on amidst troubles
 at home and abroad. Welsh outbreaks forced him in 1157
 to lead an army over the border; and a crushing repulse
 showed that he was less skilful as a general than as a
 statesman. The next year saw him drawn across the
 Channel, where he was already master of a third of the
 present France. Anjou and Touraine he had inherited
 from his father, Maine and Normandy from his mother, he
 governed Brittany through his brother, while the seven
 provinces of the South, Poitou, Saintonge, Auvergne,
 Perigord, the Limousin, the Angoumois, and Guienne,
 belonged to his wife. As Duchess of Aquitaine Eleanor
 had claims on Toulouse, and these Henry prepared in
 1159 to enforce by arms. But the campaign was turned
 to the profit of his reforms. He had already begun the

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work of bringing the baronage within the grasp of the law by sending judges from the Exchequer year after year to exact the royal dues and administer the King's justice even in castle and manor. He now attacked its military influence. Each man who held lands of a certain value was bound to furnish a knight for his lord's service; and the barons thus held a body of trained soldiers at their disposal. When Henry called his chief lords to serve in the war of Toulouse, he allowed the lower tenants to commute their service for sums payable to the royal treasury under the name of "scutage," or shield-money. The "Great Scutage" did much to disarm the baronage, while it enabled the King to hire foreign mercenaries for his service abroad. Again however he was luckless in war. King Lewis of France threw himself into Toulouse. Conscious of the ill-compacted nature of his wide dominion, Henry shrank from an open contest with his suzerain; he withdrew his forces, and the quarrel ended in 1160 by a formal alliance and the betrothal of his eldest son to the daughter of Lewis.

Archbishop Thomas.

Henry returned to his English realm to regulate the relations of the state with the Church. These rested in the main on the system established by the Conqueror, and with that system Henry had no wish to meddle. But he was resolute that, baron or priest, all should be equal before the law; and he had no more mercy for clerical than for feudal immunities. The immunities of the clergy indeed were becoming a hindrance to public justice. The clerical order in the middle ages extended far beyond the priesthood; it included in Henry's day the whole of the professional and educated classes. It was subject to the jurisdiction of the Church courts alone; but bodily punishment could only be inflicted by officers of the lay courts, and so great had the jealousy between clergy and laity become that the bishops no longer sought civil aid but restricted themselves to the purely spiritual punishments of penance and deprivation of orders. Such

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penalties formed no effectual check upon crime, and while preserving the Church courts the King aimed at the delivery of convicted offenders to secular punishment. For the carrying out of these designs he sought an agent in Thomas the Chancellor. Thomas had now been his minister for eight years, and had fought bravely in the war against Toulouse at the head of the seven hundred knights who formed his household. But the King had other work for him than war. On Theobald's death in 1162 he forced on the monks of Canterbury his election as Archbishop. But from the moment of his appointment the dramatic temper of the new Primate flung its whole energy into the part he set himself to play. At the first intimation of Henry's purpose he pointed with a laugh to his gay court attire: "You are choosing a fine dress" he said "to figure at the head of your Canterbury monks;" once monk and Archbishop he passed with a fevered earnestness from luxury to asceticism; and a visit to the Council of Tours in 1163, where the highest doctrines of ecclesiastical authority were sanctioned by Pope Alexander the Third, strengthened his purpose of struggling for the privileges of the Church. His change of attitude encouraged his old rivals at court to vex him with petty law-suits, but no breach had come with the King till Henry proposed that clerical convicts should be punished by the civil power. Thomas refused; he would only consent that a clerk, once degraded, should for after offences suffer like a layman. Both parties appealed to the "customs" of the realm; and it was to state these "customs" that a court was held in 1164 at Clarendon near Marlborough.

The report presented by bishops and barons formed the Constitutions of Clarendon, a code which in the bulk of its provisions simply re-enacted the system of the Conqueror. Every election of bishop or abbot was to take place before royal officers, in the King's chapel, and with the King's assent. The prelate elect was bound to do homage to the King for his lands before consecration,

Legal Reforms.

CHAP. III. and to hold his lands as a barony from the King, subject to all feudal burthens of taxation and attendance in the King's court. No bishop might leave the realm without the royal permission. No tenant in chief or royal servant might be excommunicated, or their land placed under interdict, but by the King's assent: What was new was the legislation respecting ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The King's court was to decide whether a suit between clerk and layman, whose nature was disputed, belonged to the Church courts or the King's. A royal officer was to be present at all ecclesiastical proceedings in order to confine the Bishop's court within its own due limits, and a clerk convicted there passed at once under the civil jurisdiction. An appeal was left from the Archbishop's court to the King's court for defect of justice, but none might appeal to the Papal court save with the King's leave. The privilege of sanctuary in churches and churchyards was repealed, so far as property and not persons was concerned. After a passionate refusal the Primate was at last brought to set his seal to these Constitutions, but his assent was soon retracted, and Henry's savage resentment threw the moral advantage of the position into his opponent's hands. Vexatious charges were brought against Thomas, and he was summoned to answer at a Council held in the autumn at Northampton. All urged him to submit; his very life was said to be in peril from the King's wrath. But in the presence of danger the courage of the man rose to its full height. Grasping his archiepiscopal cross he entered the royal court, forbade the nobles to condemn him, and appealed in the teeth of the Constitutions to the Papal See. Shouts of "Traitor!" followed him as he withdrew. The Primate turned fiercely at the word: "Were I a knight," he shouted back, "my sword should answer that foul taunt!" Once alone however, dread pressed more heavily; he fled in disguise at nightfall and reached France through Flanders.

Great as were the dangers it was to bring with it, the

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flight of Thomas left Henry free to carry on the reforms he had planned. In spite of denunciations from Primate and Pope, the Constitutions regulated from this time the relations of the Church with the state. Henry now turned to the actual organization of the realm. His reign, it has been truly said, "initiated the rule of law" as distinct from the despotism, whether personal or tempered by routine, of the Norman sovereigns. It was by successive "assizes" or codes issued with the sanction of the great councils of barons and prelates which he summoned year by year, that he perfected in a system of gradual reforms the administrative measures which Henry the First had begun. The fabric of our judicial legislation commences in 1166 with the Assize of Clarendon, the first object of which was to provide for the order of the realm by reviving the old English system of mutual security or frankpledge. No stranger might abide in any place save a borough and only there for a single night unless sureties were given for his good behaviour; and the list of such strangers was to be submitted to the itinerant justices. In the provisions of this assize for the repression of crime we find the origin of trial by jury, so often attributed to earlier times. Twelve lawful men of each hundred, with four from each township, were sworn to present those who were known or reputed as criminals within their district for trial by ordeal. The jurors were thus not merely witnesses, but sworn to act as judges also in determining the value of the charge, and it is this double character of Henry's jurors that has descended to our "grand jury," who still remain charged with the duty of presenting criminals for trial after examination of the witnesses against them. Two later steps brought the jury to its modern condition. Under Edward the First witnesses acquainted with the particular fact in question were added in each case to the general jury, and by the separation of these two classes of jurors at a later time the last became simply "witnesses" without any judicial

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CHAP. III. power, while the first ceased to be witnesses at all and became our modern jurors, who are only judges of the testimony given. With this assize too a practice which had prevailed from the earliest English times, the practice of "compurgation," passed away. Under this system the accused could be acquitted of the charge by the voluntary oath of his neighbours and kinsmen; but this was abolished by the Assize of Clarendon, and for the fifty years which followed it his trial, after the investigation of the grand jury, was found solely in the ordeal or "judgement of God," where innocence was proved by the power of holding hot iron in the hand or by sinking when flung into the water, for swimming was a proof of guilt. It was the abolition of the whole system of ordeal by the Council of Lateran in 1216 which led the way to the establishment of what is called a "petty jury" for the final trial of prisoners.

*Murder
of
Thomas.*

But Henry's work of reorganization had hardly begun when it was broken by the pressure of the strife with the Primate. For six years the contest raged bitterly; at Rome, at Paris, the agents of the two powers intrigued against each other. Henry stooped to acts of the meanest persecution in driving the Primate's kinsmen from England, and in confiscating the lands of their order till the monks of Pontigny should refuse Thomas a home; while Beket himself exhausted the patience of his friends by his violence and excommunications, as well as by the stubbornness with which he clung to the offensive clause "Saving the honour of my order," the addition of which to his consent would have practically neutralized the King's reforms. The Pope counselled mildness, the French king for a time withdrew his support, his own clerks gave way at last. "Come up," said one of them bitterly when his horse stumbled on the road, "saving the honour of the Church and my order." But neither warning nor desertion moved the resolution of the Primate. Henry, in dread of Papal excommunication,

resolved in 1170 on the coronation of his son: and this office, which belonged to the see of Canterbury, he transferred to the Archbishop of York. But the Pope's hands were now freed by his successes in Italy, and the threat of an interdict forced the King to a show of submission. The Archbishop was allowed to return after a reconciliation with the King at Freteval, and the Kentishmen flocked around him with uproarious welcome as he entered Canterbury. "This is England," said his clerks, as they saw the white headlands of the coast. "You will wish yourself elsewhere before fifty days are gone," said Thomas sadly, and his foreboding showed his appreciation of Henry's character. He was now in the royal power, and orders had already been issued in the younger Henry's name for his arrest when four knights from the King's court, spurred to outrage by a passionate outburst of their master's wrath, crossed the sea, and on the 29th of December forced their way into the Archbishop's palace. After a stormy parley with him in his chamber they withdrew to arm. Thomas was hurried by his clerks into the cathedral, but as he reached the steps leading from the transept to the choir his pursuers burst in from the cloisters. "Where," cried Reginald Fitzurse in the dusk of the dimly lighted minster, "where is the traitor, Thomas Beket?" The Primate turned resolutely back: "Here am I, no traitor, but a priest of God," he replied, and again descending the steps he placed himself with his back against a pillar and fronted his foes. All the bravery and violence of his old knightly life seemed to revive in Thomas as he tossed back the threats and demands of his assailants. "You are our prisoner," shouted Fitzurse, and the four knights seized him to drag him from the church. "Do not touch me, Reginald," cried the Primate, "pander that you are, you owe me fealty;" and availing himself of his personal strength he shook him roughly off. "Strike, strike," retorted Fitzurse, and blow after blow struck Thomas to the ground. A retainer of Ranulf de Broc

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with the point of his sword scattered the Primate's brains on the ground. "Let us be off," he cried triumphantly, "this traitor will never rise again."

The brutal murder was received with a thrill of horror throughout Christendom; miracles were wrought at the martyr's tomb; he was canonized, and became the most popular of English saints. The stately "martyrdom" which rose over his relics at Canterbury seemed to embody the triumph which his blood had won. But the contest had in fact revealed a new current of educated opinion which was to be more fatal to the Church than the reforms of the King. Throughout it Henry had been aided by a silent revolution which now began to part the purely literary class from the purely clerical. During the earlier ages of our history we have seen literature springing up in ecclesiastical schools, and protecting itself against the ignorance and violence of the time under ecclesiastical privileges. Almost all our writers from Bæda to the days of the Angevins are clergy or monks. The revival of letters which followed the Conquest was a purely ecclesiastical revival; the intellectual impulse which Bec had given to Normandy travelled across the Channel with the new Norman abbots who were established in the greater English monasteries; and writing-rooms or scriptoria, where the chief works of Latin literature, patristic or classical, were copied and illuminated, the lives of saints compiled, and entries noted in the monastic chronicle, formed from this time a part of every religious house of any importance. But the literature which found this religious shelter was not so much ecclesiastical as secular. Even the philosophical and devotional impulse given by Anselm produced no English work of theology or metaphysics. The literary revival which followed the Conquest took mainly the old historical form. At Durham Turgot and Simeon threw into Latin shape the national annals to the time of Henry the First with an especial regard to northern affairs, while the earlier events of Stephen's reign were noted down by

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two Priors of Hexham in the wild border-land between England and the Scots.

These however were the colourless jottings of mere annalists; it was in the Scriptorium of Canterbury, in Osbern's lives of the English saints or in Eadmer's record of the struggle of Anselm against the Red King and his successor that we see the first indications of a distinctively English feeling telling on the new literature. The national impulse is yet more conspicuous in the two historians that followed. The war-songs of the English conquerors of Britain were preserved by Henry, an Arch-deacon of Huntingdon, who wove them into annals compiled from Bæda and the Chronicle; while William, the librarian of Malmesbury, as industriously collected the lighter ballads which embodied the popular traditions of the English Kings. It is in William above all others that we see the new tendency of English literature. In himself, as in his work, he marks the fusion of the conquerors and the conquered, for he was of both English and Norman parentage and his sympathies were as divided as his blood. The form and style of his writings show the influence of those classical studies which were now reviving throughout Christendom. Monk as he is, William discards the older ecclesiastical models and the annalistic form. Events are grouped together with no strict reference to time, while the lively narrative flows rapidly and loosely along with constant breaks of digression over the general history of Europe and the Church. It is in this change of historic spirit that William takes his place as first of the more statesmanlike and philosophic school of historians who began to arise in direct connexion with the Court, and among whom the author of the chronicle which commonly bears the name of "Benedict of Peterborough" with his continuator Roger of Howden are the most conspicuous. Both held judicial offices under Henry the Second, and it is to their position at Court that they owe the fulness and accuracy of their

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information as to affairs at home and abroad, as well as their copious supply of official documents. What is noteworthy in these writers is the purely political temper with which they regard the conflict of Church and State in their time. But the English court had now become the centre of a distinctly secular literature. The treatise of Ranulf de Glanvill, a justiciar of Henry the Second, is the earliest work on English law, as that of the royal treasurer, Richard Fitz-Neal, on the Exchequer is the earliest on English government.

Gerald of
Wales.

Still more distinctly secular than these, though the work of a priest who claimed to be a bishop, are the writings of Gerald de Barri. Gerald is the father of our popular literature as he is the originator of the political and ecclesiastical pamphlet. Welsh blood (as his usual name of Giraldus Cambrensis implies) mixed with Norman in his veins, and something of the restless Celtic fire runs alike through his writings and his life. A busy scholar at Paris, a reforming Archdeacon in Wales, the wittiest of Court chaplains, the most troublesome of bishops, Gerald became the gayest and most amusing of all the authors of his time. In his hands the stately Latin tongue took the vivacity and picturesqueness of the jongleur's verse. Reared as he had been in classic studies, he threw pedantry contemptuously aside. "It is better to be dumb than not to be understood," is his characteristic apology for the novelty of his style: "new times require new fashions, and so I have thrown utterly aside the old and dry method of some authors and aimed at adopting the fashion of speech which is actually in vogue to-day." His tract on the conquest of Ireland and his account of Wales, which are in fact reports of two journeys undertaken in those countries with John and Archbishop Baldwin, illustrate his rapid faculty of careless observation, his audacity, and his good sense. They are just the sort of lively, dashing letters that we find in the correspondence of a modern journal. There is the same

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modern tone in his political pamphlets; his profusion of jests, his fund of anecdote, the aptness of his quotations, his natural shrewdness and critical acumen, the clearness and vivacity of his style, are backed by a fearlessness and impetuosity that made him a dangerous assailant even to such a ruler as Henry the Second. The invectives in which Gerald poured out his resentment against the Angevins are the cause of half the scandal about Henry and his sons which has found its way into history. His life was wasted in an ineffectual attempt to secure the see of St. David's, but his pungent pen played its part in rousing the nation to its later struggle with the Crown.

A tone of distinct hostility to the Church developed itself almost from the first among the singers of romance. Romance had long before taken root in the court of Henry the First, where under the patronage of Queen Maud the dreams of Arthur, so long cherished by the Celts of Brittany, and which had travelled to Wales in the train of the exile Rhys ap Tewdor, took shape in the History of the Britons by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Myth, legend, tradition, the classical pedantry of the day, Welsh hopes of future triumph over the Saxon, the memories of the Crusades and of the world-wide dominion of Charles the Great, were mingled together by this daring fabulist in a work whose popularity became at once immense. Alfred of Beverly transferred Geoffrey's inventions into the region of sober history, while two Norman *trouveurs*, Gaimar and Wace, translated them into French verse. So complete was the credence they obtained that Arthur's tomb at Glastonbury was visited by Henry the Second while the child of his son Geoffrey and of Constance of Brittany received the name of the Celtic hero. Out of Geoffrey's creation grew little by little the poem of the Table Round. Brittany, which had mingled with the story of Arthur the older and more mysterious legend of the Enchanter Merlin, lent that of Lancelot to the wandering

CHAP. III. minstrels of the day, who moulded it as they wandered from hall to hall into the familiar tale of knighthood wrested from its loyalty by the love of woman. The stories of Tristram and Gawayne, at first as independent as that of Lancelot, were drawn with it into the whirlpool of Arthurian romance; and when the Church, jealous of the popularity of the legends of chivalry, invented as a counteracting influence the poem of the Sacred Dish, the San Graal which held the blood of the Cross invisible to all eyes but those of the pure in heart; the genius of a Court poet, Walter de Map, wove the rival legends together, sent Arthur and his knights wandering over sea and land in quest of the San Graal, and crowned the work by the figure of Sir Galahad, the type of ideal knighthood, without fear and without reproach.

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Walter
de Map.

Walter stands before us as the representative of a sudden outburst of literary, social, and religious criticism which followed this growth of romance and the appearance of a freer historical tone in the court of the two Henries. Born on the Welsh border, a student at Paris, a favourite with the King, a royal chaplain, justiciary, and ambassador, his genius was as various as it was prolific. He is as much at his ease in sweeping together the chit-chat of the time in his "Courtly Trifles" as in creating the character of Sir Galahad. But he only rose to his fullest strength when he turned from the fields of romance to that of Church reform and embodied the ecclesiastical abuses of his day in the figure of his "Bishop Goliath." The whole spirit of Henry and his Court in their struggle with Thomas is reflected and illustrated in the apocalypse and confession of this imaginary prelate. Picture after picture strips the veil from the corruption of the mediæval Church, its indolence, its thirst for gain, its secret immorality. The whole body of the clergy from Pope to hedge-priest is painted as busy in the chase for gain; what escapes the bishop is snapped up by the archdeacon, what escapes the archdeacon is nosed and hunted down by

the dean, while a host of minor officials prowl hungrily around these greater marauders. Out of the crowd of figures which fills the canvas of the satirist, pluralist vicars, abbots "purple as their wines," monks feeding and chattering together like parrots in the refectory, rises the Philistine Bishop, light of purpose, void of conscience, lost in sensuality, drunken, unchaste, the Goliath who sums up the enormities of all, and against whose forehead this new David slings his sharp pebble of the brook.

It would be in the highest degree unjust to treat such invectives as sober history, or to judge the Church of the twelfth century by the taunts of Walter de Map. What writings such as his bring home to us is the upgrowth of a new literary class, not only standing apart from the Church but regarding it with a hardly disguised ill-will, and breaking down the unquestioning reverence with which men had till now regarded it by their sarcasm and abuse. The tone of intellectual contempt which begins with Walter de Map goes deepening on till it culminates in Chaucer and passes into the open revolt of the Lollard. But even in these early days we can hardly doubt that it gave Henry strength in his contest with the Church. So little indeed did he suffer from the murder of Archbishop Thomas that the years which follow it form the grandest portion of his reign. While Rome was threatening excommunication he added a new realm to his dominions. Ireland had long since fallen from the civilization and learning which its missionaries brought in the seventh century to the shores of Northumbria. Every element of improvement or progress which had been introduced into the island disappeared in the long and desperate struggle with the Danes. The coast-towns which the invaders founded, such as Dublin or Waterford, remained Danish in blood and manners and at feud with the Celtic tribes around them, though sometimes forced by the fortunes of war to pay tribute and to accept the over-lordship of the Irish Kings. It was through these towns however that the

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intercourse with England which had ceased since the eighth century was to some extent renewed in the eleventh. Cut off from the Church of the island by national antipathy, the Danish coast-cities applied to the See of Canterbury for the ordination of their bishops, and acknowledged a right of spiritual supervision in Lanfranc and Anselm. The relations thus formed were drawn closer by a slave-trade between the two countries which the Conqueror and Bishop Wulfstan succeeded for a time in suppressing at Bristol but which appears to have quickly revived. At the time of Henry the Second's accession Ireland was full of Englishmen who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery in spite of royal prohibitions and the spiritual menaces of the English Church. The slave-trade afforded a legitimate pretext for war, had a pretext been needed by the ambition of Henry the Second; and within a few months of that King's coronation John of Salisbury was despatched to obtain the Papal sanction for an invasion of the island. The enterprize, as it was laid before Pope Hadrian IV., took the colour of a crusade. The isolation of Ireland from the general body of Christendom, the absence of learning and civilization, the scandalous vices of its people, were alleged as the grounds of Henry's action. It was the general belief of the time that all islands fell under the jurisdiction of the Papal See, and it was as a possession of the Roman Church that Henry sought Hadrian's permission to enter Ireland. His aim was "to enlarge the bounds of the Church, to restrain the progress of vices, to correct the manners of its people and to plant virtue among them, and to increase the Christian religion." He engaged to "subject the people to laws, to extirpate vicious customs, to respect the rights of the native Churches, and to enforce the payment of Peter's pence" as a recognition of the overlordship of the Roman See. Hadrian by his bull approved the enterprize as one prompted by "the ardour of faith and love of religion," and declared his will that



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the people of Ireland should receive Henry with all honour, and revere him as their lord.

The Papal bull was produced in a great council of the English baronage, but the opposition was strong enough to force on Henry a temporary abandonment of his designs, and fourteen years passed before the scheme was brought to life again by the flight of Dermot, King of Leinster, to Henry's court. Dermot had been driven from his dominions in one of the endless civil wars which devastated the island; he now did homage for his kingdom to Henry, and returned to Ireland with promises of aid from the English knighthood. He was followed in 1169 by Robert FitzStephen, a son of the Constable of Cardigan, with a little band of a hundred and forty knights, sixty men-at-arms, and three or four hundred Welsh archers. Small as was the number of the adventurers, their horses and arms proved irresistible by the Irish kernes; a sally of the men of Wexford was avenged by the storm of their town; the Ossory clans were defeated with a terrible slaughter, and Dermot, seizing a head from the heap of trophies which his men piled at his feet, tore off in savage triumph its nose and lips with his teeth. The arrival of fresh forces heralded the coming of Richard of Clare, Earl of Pembroke and Striguil, a ruined baron who bore the nickname of Strongbow, and who in defiance of Henry's prohibition landed near Waterford with a force of fifteen hundred men as Dermot's mercenary. The city was at once stormed, and the united forces of the Earl and King marched to the siege of Dublin. In spite of a relief attempted by the King of Connaught, who was recognized as overking of the island by the rest of the tribes, Dublin was taken by surprise; and the marriage of Richard with Eva, Dermot's daughter, left the Earl on the death of his father-in-law which followed quickly on these successes master of his kingdom of Leinster. The new lord had soon however to hurry back to England and appease the jealousy of Henry by the surrender of Dublin to the

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Revolt of
the
younger
Henry.

Had fate suffered Henry to carry out his purpose, the conquest of Ireland would now have been accomplished. The King of Connaught indeed and the chiefs of Ulster refused him homage, but the rest of the Irish tribes owned his suzerainty; the bishops in synod at Cashel recognized him as their lord; and he was preparing to penetrate to the north and west, and to secure his conquest by a systematic erection of castles throughout the country, when the need of making terms with Rome, whose interdict threatened to avenge the murder of Archbishop Thomas, recalled him in the spring of 1172 to Normandy. Henry averted the threatened sentence by a show of submission. The judicial provisions in the Constitutions of Clarendon were in form annulled, and liberty of election was restored in the case of bishopricks and abbacies. In reality however the victory rested with the King. Throughout his reign ecclesiastical appointments remained practically in his hands and the King's Court asserted its power over the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishops. But the strife with Thomas had roused into active life every element of danger which surrounded Henry, the envious dread of his neighbours, the disaffection of his own house, the disgust of the barons at the repeated blows which he levelled at their military and judicial power. The King's withdrawal of the office of sheriff from the great nobles of the shire to entrust it to the lawyers and courtiers who already furnished the staff of the royal judges quickened the resentment of the baronage into revolt. His wife Eleanor, now parted from Henry by a bitter hate, spurred her eldest son, whose coronation had given him the title of king, to demand possession of the English realm. On his father's refusal the boy sought refuge with Lewis of France, and his flight was the signal

for a vast rising. France, Flanders, and Scotland joined in league against Henry; his younger sons, Richard and Geoffry, took up arms in Aquitaine, while the Earl of Leicester sailed from Flanders with an army of mercenaries to stir up England to revolt. The Earl's descent ended in a crushing defeat near St. Edmundsbury at the hands of the King's justiciars; but no sooner had the French king entered Normandy and invested Rouen than the revolt of the baronage burst into flame. The Scots crossed the border, Roger Mowbray rose in Yorkshire, Ferrars, Earl of Derby, in the midland shires, Hugh Bigod in the eastern counties, while a Flemish fleet prepared to support the insurrection by a descent upon the coast. The murder of Archbishop Thomas still hung round Henry's neck, and his first act in hurrying to England to meet these perils in 1174 was to prostrate himself before the shrine of the new martyr and to submit to a public scourging in expiation of his sin. But the penance was hardly wrought when all danger was dispelled by a series of triumphs. The King of Scotland, William the Lion, surprized by the English under cover of a mist, fell into the hands of the justiciary, Ranulf de Glanvill, and at the retreat of the Scots the English rebels hastened to lay down their arms. With the army of mercenaries which he had brought over sea Henry was able to return to Normandy, to raise the siege of Rouen, and to reduce his sons to submission.

Through the next ten years Henry's power was at its height. The French King was cowed. The Scotch King bought his release in 1175 by owning Henry's suzerainty. The Scotch barons did homage, and English garrisons manned the strongest of the Scotch castles. In England itself church and baronage were alike at the King's mercy. Eleanor was imprisoned: and the younger Henry, though always troublesome, remained powerless to do harm. The King availed himself of this rest from outer foes to push forward his judicial and administrative organization. At the outset of his reign he had restored the King's court and

CHAP. III.
Henry the
Second.
1154-
1189.

Later
reforms.

CHAP. III. the occasional circuits of its justices; but the revolt was
 Henry the hardly over when in 1176 the Assize of Northampton ren-
 Second. dered this institution permanent and regular by dividing the
 1154- kingdom into six districts, to each of which three itinerant
 1189. judges were assigned. The circuits thus marked out
 correspond roughly with those that still exist. The primary
 object of these circuits was financial; but the rendering of
 the King's justice went on side by side with the exaction
 of the King's dues, and this carrying of justice to every
 corner of the realm was made still more effective by the
 abolition of all feudal exemptions from the royal juris-
 diction. The chief danger of the new system lay in
 the opportunities it afforded to judicial corruption; and
 so great were its abuses, that in 1178 Henry was forced
 to restrict for a while the number of justices to five, and
 to reserve appeals from their court to himself in council.
 The Court of Appeal which was thus created, that of the
 King in Council, gave birth as time went on to tribunal
 after tribunal. It is from it that the judicial powers now
 exercised by the Privy Council are derived, as well as the
 equitable jurisdiction of the Chancellor. In the next cen-
 tury it became the Great Council of the realm, and it is
 from this Great Council, in its two distinct capacities,
 that the Privy Council drew its legislative, and the House
 of Lords its judicial character. The Court of Star
 Chamber and the Judicial Committee of the Privy
 Council are later offshoots of Henry's Court of Appeal.
 From the judicial organization of the realm, he turned
 to its military organization, and in 1181 an Assize of
 Arms restored the national fyrd or militia to the place
 which it had lost at the Conquest. The substitution of
 scutage for military service had freed the crown from
 its dependence on the baronage and its feudal retainers;
 the Assize of Arms replaced this feudal organization by
 the older obligation of every freeman to serve in defence
 of the realm. Every knight was now bound to appear in
 coat of mail and with shield and lance, every freeholder

with lance and hauberk, every burgess and poorer freeman
 with lance and helmet, at the King's call. The levy of
 an armed nation was thus placed wholly at the disposal
 of the Crown for purposes of defence.

A fresh revolt of the younger Henry with his brother
 Geoffry in 1183 hardly broke the current of Henry's
 success. The revolt ended with the young King's death,
 and in 1186 this was followed by the death of Geoffry.
 Richard, now his father's heir, remained busy in Aquit-
 taine; and Henry was himself occupied with plans for the
 recovery of Jerusalem, which had been taken by Saladin
 in 1187. The "Saladin tithe," a tax levied on all goods
 and chattels, and memorable as the first English instance
 of taxation on personal property, was granted to the King
 at the opening of 1188 to support his intended Crusade.
 But the Crusade was hindered by strife which broke out
 between Richard and the new French King, Philip; and
 while Henry strove in vain to bring about peace, a sus-
 picion that he purposed to make his youngest son, John,
 his heir drove Richard to Philip's side. His father,
 broken in health and spirits, negotiated fruitlessly through
 the winter, but with the spring of 1189 Richard and the
 French King suddenly appeared before Le Mans. Henry
 was driven in headlong flight from the town. Tradition
 tells how from a height where he halted to look back on
 the burning city, so dear to him as his birthplace, the
 King hurled his curse against God: "Since Thou hast
 taken from me the town I loved best, where I was born
 and bred, and where my father lies buried, I will have my
 revenge on Thee too—I will rob Thee of that thing Thou
 lovest most in me." If the words were uttered, they were
 the frenzied words of a dying man. Death drew Henry to
 the home of his race, but Tours fell as he lay at Saumur,
 and the hunted King was driven to beg mercy from his
 foes. They gave him the list of the conspirators against
 him: at its head was the name of one, his love for whom
 had brought with it the ruin that was crushing him, his

CHAP. III.
 Henry the
 Second.
 1154-
 1189.
 Henry's
 Death.

CHAP. III. youngest son, John. "Now," he said, as he turned his face to the wall, "let things go as they will—I care no more for myself or for the world." The end was come at last. Henry was borne to Chinon by the silvery waters of Vienne, and muttering, "Shame, shame on a conquered King," passed sullenly away.

Henry the
Second.
1154—
1189.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ANGEVIN KINGS.

1189—1204.

THE fall of Henry the Second only showed the strength of the system he had built up on this side the sea. In the hands of the Justiciar, Ranulf de Glanvill, England remained peaceful through the last stormy months of his reign, and his successor Richard found it undisturbed when he came for his crowning in the autumn of 1189. Though born at Oxford, Richard had been bred in Aquitaine; he was an utter stranger to his realm, and his visit was simply for the purpose of gathering money for a Crusade. Sheriffdoms, bishopricks, were sold; even the supremacy over Scotland was bought back again by William the Lion; and it was with the wealth which these measures won that Richard made his way in 1190 to Marseilles and sailed thence to Messina. Here he found his army and a host under King Philip of France; and the winter was spent in quarrels between the two Kings and a strife between Richard and Tancred of Sicily. In the spring of 1191 his mother Eleanor arrived with ill news from England. Richard had left the realm under the regency of two bishops, Hugh Puiset of Durham and William Longchamp of Ely; but before quitting France he had entrusted it wholly to the latter, who stood at the head of Church and State as at once Justiciar and Papal Legate. Longchamp was loyal to the King, but his exactions and scorn of Englishmen roused a fierce hatred among the baronage, and this hatred found a head in John. While

*John and
Long-
champ.*

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richly gifting his brother with earldoms and lands, Richard had taken oath from him that he would quit England for three years. But tidings that the Justiciar was striving to secure the succession of Arthur, the child of his elder brother Geoffry and of Constance of Brittany, to the English crown at once recalled John to the realm, and peace between him and Longchamp was only preserved by the influence of the queen-mother Eleanor. Richard met these news by sending William of Coutances, the Archbishop of Rouen, with full but secret powers to England. On his landing in the summer of 1191 William found the country already in arms. No battle had been fought, but John had seized many of the royal castles, and the indignation stirred by Longchamp's arrest of Archbishop Geoffry of York, a bastard son of Henry the Second, called the whole baronage to the field. The nobles swore fealty to John as Richard's successor, and William of Coutances saw himself forced to show his commission as Justiciar, and to assent to Longchamp's exile from the realm.

Richard.

The tidings of this revolution reached Richard in the Holy Land. He had landed at Acre in the summer and joined with the French King in its siege. But on the surrender of the town Philip at once sailed home, while Richard, marching from Acre to Joppa, pushed inland to Jerusalem. The city however was saved by false news of its strength, and through the following winter and the spring of 1192 the King limited his activity to securing the fortresses of southern Palestine. In June he again advanced on Jerusalem, but the revolt of his army forced him a second time to fall back, and news of Philip's intrigues with John drove him to abandon further efforts. There was need to hasten home. Sailing for speed's sake in a merchant vessel, he was driven by a storm on the Adriatic coast, and while journeying in disguise overland arrested in December at Vienna by his personal enemy, Duke Leopold of Austria. Through the whole year John, in disgust at his

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displacement by William of Coutances, had been plotting fruitlessly with Philip. But the news of this capture at once roused both to activity. John secured his castles and seized Windsor, giving out that the King would never return; while Philip strove to induce the Emperor, Henry the Sixth, to whom the Duke of Austria had given Richard up, to retain his captive. But a new influence now appeared on the scene. The see of Canterbury was vacant, and Richard from his prison bestowed it on Hubert Walter, the Bishop of Salisbury, a nephew of Ranulf de Glanvill and who had acted as secretary to Bishop Longchamp. Hubert's ability was seen in the skill with which he held John at bay and raised the enormous ransom which Henry demanded, the whole people, clergy as well as lay, paying a fourth of their moveable goods. To gain his release however Richard was forced besides this payment of ransom to do homage to the Emperor, not only for the kingdom of Arles with which Henry invested him but for England itself, whose crown he resigned into the Emperor's hands and received back as a fief. But John's open revolt made even these terms welcome, and Richard hurried to England in the spring of 1194. He found the rising already quelled by the decision with which the Primate led an army against John's castles, and his landing was followed by his brother's complete submission.

The firmness of Hubert Walter had secured order in England, but oversea Richard found himself face to face with dangers which he was too clear-sighted to undervalue. Destitute of his father's administrative genius, less ingenious in his political conceptions than John, Richard was far from being a mere soldier. A love of adventure, a pride in sheer physical strength, here and there a romantic generosity, jostled roughly with the craft, the unscrupulousness, the violence of his race; but he was at heart a statesman, cool and patient in the execution of his plans as he was bold in their conception. "The devil is loose; take care

*Richard
and
Philip.*

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1204.

of yourself," Philip had written to John at the news of Richard's release. In the French King's case a restless ambition was spurred to action by insults which he had borne during the Crusade. He had availed himself of Richard's imprisonment to invade Normandy, while the lords of Aquitaine rose in open revolt under the troubadour Bertrand de Born. Jealousy of the rule of strangers, weariness of the turbulence of the mercenary soldiers of the Angevins or of the greed and oppression of their financial administration, combined with an impatience of their firm government and vigorous justice to alienate the nobles of their provinces on the Continent. Loyalty among the people there was none; even Anjou, the home of their race, drifted towards Philip as steadily as Poitou. But in warlike ability Richard was more than Philip's peer. He held him in check on the Norman frontier and surprized his treasure at Freteval while he reduced to submission the rebels of Aquitaine. Hubert Walter gathered vast sums to support the army of mercenaries which Richard led against his foes. The country groaned under its burdens, but it owned the justice and firmness of the Primate's rule, and the measures which he took to procure money with as little oppression as might be proved steps in the education of the nation in its own self-government. The taxes were assessed by a jury of sworn knights at each circuit of the justices; the grand jury of the county was based on the election of knights in the hundred courts; and the keeping of pleas of the crown was taken from the sheriff and given to a newly elected officer, the coroner. In these elections were found at a later time precedents for parliamentary representation; in Hubert's mind they were doubtless intended to do little more than reconcile the people to the crushing taxation. His work poured a million into the treasury, and enabled Richard during a short truce to detach Flanders by his bribes from the French alliance, and to unite the Counts of Chartres, Champagne, and Boulogne with the Bretons in a revolt against Philip.

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*Château
Gaillard.*

He won a yet more valuable aid in the election of his nephew Otto of Saxony, a son of Henry the Lion, to the German throne, and his envoy William Longchamp knitted an alliance which would bring the German lances to bear on the King of Paris.

But the security of Normandy was requisite to the success of these wider plans, and Richard saw that its defence could no longer rest on the loyalty of the Norman people. His father might trace his descent through Matilda from the line of Rolf, but the Angevin ruler was in fact a stranger to the Norman. It was impossible for a Norman to recognize his Duke with any real sympathy in the Angevin prince whom he saw moving along the border at the head of Brabançon mercenaries, in whose camp the old names of the Norman baronage were missing and Merchadé, a Gascon ruffian, held supreme command. The purely military site that Richard selected for a new fortress with which he guarded the border showed his realization of the fact that Normandy could now only be held by force of arms. As a monument of warlike skill his "Saucy Castle," Château Gaillard, stands first among the fortresses of the middle ages. Richard fixed its site where the Seine bends suddenly at Gaillon in a great semicircle to the north, and where the valley of Les Andelys breaks the line of the chalk cliffs along its banks. Blue masses of woodland crown the distant hills; within the river curve lies a dull reach of flat meadow, round which the Seine, broken with green islets and dappled with the grey and blue of the sky, flashes like a silver bow on its way to Rouen. The castle formed part of an entrenched camp which Richard designed to cover his Norman capital. Approach by the river was blocked by a stockade and a bridge of boats, by a fort on the islet in mid stream, and by a tower which the King built in the valley of the Gambon, then an impassable marsh. In the angle between this valley and the Seine, on a spur of the chalk hills which only a narrow neck of land connects with the general

CHAP. IV. plateau, rose at the height of three hundred feet above the river the crowning fortress of the whole. Its outworks and the walls which connected it with the town and stockade have for the most part gone, but time and the hand of man have done little to destroy the fortifications themselves—the fosse, hewn deep into the solid rock, with casemates hollowed out along its sides, the fluted walls of the citadel, the huge donjon looking down on the brown roofs and huddled gables of Les Andelys. Even now in its ruin we can understand the triumphant outburst of its royal builder as he saw it rising against the sky: “How pretty a child is mine, this child of but one year old!”

Richard's death.

The easy reduction of Normandy on the fall of Château Gaillard at a later time proved Richard's foresight; but foresight and sagacity were mingled in him with a brutal violence and a callous indifference to honour. “I would take it, were its walls of iron,” Philip exclaimed in wrath as he saw the fortress rise. “I would hold it, were its walls of butter,” was the defiant answer of his foe. It was Church land and the Archbishop of Rouen laid Normandy under interdict at its seizure, but the King met the interdict with mockery, and intrigued with Rome till the censure was withdrawn. He was just as defiant of a “rain of blood,” whose fall scared his courtiers. “Had an angel from heaven bid him abandon his work,” says a cool observer, “he would have answered with a curse.” The twelve-month's hard work, in fact, by securing the Norman frontier set Richard free to deal his long-planned blow at Philip. Money only was wanting; for England had at last struck against the continued exactions. In 1198 Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, brought nobles and bishops to refuse a new demand for the maintenance of foreign soldiers, and Hubert Walter resigned in despair. A new justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter, Earl of Essex, extorted some money by a harsh assize of the forests; but the exchequer was soon drained, and Richard listened with more than the greed of his race to rumours that a treasure had been

found in the fields of the Limousin. Twelve knights of gold seated round a golden table were the find, it was said, of the Lord of Chaluz. Treasure-trove at any rate there was, and in the spring of 1199 Richard prowled around the walls. But the castle held stubbornly out till the King's greed passed into savage menace. He would hang all, he swore—man, woman, the very child at the breast. In the midst of his threats an arrow from the walls struck him down. He died as he had lived, owning the wild passion which for seven years past had kept him from confession lest he should be forced to pardon Philip, forgiving with kingly generosity the archer who had shot him.

The Angevin dominion broke to pieces at his death. John was acknowledged as King in England and Normandy, Aquitaine was secured for him by its Duchess, his mother Eleanor; but Anjou, Maine, and Touraine did homage to Arthur, the son of his elder brother Geoffry, the late Duke of Brittany. The ambition of Philip, who protected his cause, turned the day against Arthur; the Angevins rose against the French garrisons with which the French King practically annexed the country, and in May 1200 a treaty between the two kings left John master of the whole dominion of his house. But fresh troubles broke out in Poitou; Philip, on John's refusal to answer the charges of the Poitevin barons at his Court, declared in 1202 his fiefs forfeited; and Arthur, now a boy of fifteen, strove to seize Eleanor in the castle of Mirabeau. Surprized at its siege by a rapid march of the King, the boy was taken prisoner to Rouen, and murdered there in the spring of 1203, as men believed, by his uncle's hand. This brutal outrage at once roused the French provinces in revolt, while Philip sentenced John to forfeiture as a murderer and marched straight on Normandy. The ease with which the conquest of the Duchy was effected can only be explained by the utter absence of any popular resistance on the part of the Normans themselves. Half a century before the sight of a Frenchman in the land

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The Angevin Kings.
1189-1204.

Loss of Normandy.

CHAP. IV. would have roused every peasant to arms from Avranches to Dieppe. But town after town surrendered at the mere summons of Philip, and the conquest was hardly over before Normandy settled down into the most loyal of the provinces of France. Much of this was due to the wise liberality with which Philip met the claims of the towns to independence and self-government, as well as to the overpowering force and military ability with which the conquest was effected. But the utter absence of opposition sprang from a deeper cause. To the Norman his transfer from John to Philip was a mere passing from one foreign master to another, and foreigner for foreigner Philip was the less alien of the two. Between France and Normandy there had been as many years of friendship as of strife; between Norman and Angevin lay a century of bitterest hate. Moreover, the subjection to France was the realization in fact of a dependence which had always existed in theory; Philip entered Rouen as the over-lord of its Dukes; while the submission to the house of Anjou had been the most humiliating of all submissions, the submission to an equal. In 1204 Philip turned on the south with as startling a success. Maine, Anjou, and Touraine passed with little resistance into his hands, and the death of Eleanor was followed by the submission of the bulk of Aquitaine. Little was left save the country south of the Garonne; and from the lordship of a vast empire that stretched from the Tyne to the Pyrenees John saw himself reduced at a blow to the realm of England.

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BOOK III.

THE CHARTER.

1204—1291.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK III.

1204—1291.

A chronicle drawn up at the monastery of Barnwell near Cambridge, and which has been embodied in the "Memoriale" of Walter of Coventry, gives us a contemporary account of the period from 1201 to 1225. We possess another contemporary annalist for the same period in Roger of Wendover, the first of the published chroniclers of St. Albans, whose work extends to 1235. Though full of detail Roger is inaccurate, and he has strong royal and ecclesiastical sympathies; but his chronicle was subsequently revised in a more patriotic sense by another monk of the same abbey, Matthew Paris, and continued in the "Greater Chronicle" of the latter.

Matthew has left a parallel but shorter account of the time in his "Historia Anglorum" (from the Conquest to 1253). He is the last of the great chroniclers of his house; for the chronicles of Rishanger, his successor at St. Albans, and of the obscurer annalists who worked on at that Abbey till the Wars of the Roses are little save scant and lifeless jottings of events which become more and more local as time goes on. The annals of the abbeys of Waverley, Dunstable, and Burton, which have been published in the "Annales Monastici" of the Rolls series, add important details for the reigns of John and Henry III. Those of Melrose, Osney, and Lanercost help us in the close of the latter reign, where help is especially welcome. For the Barons' war we have besides these the royalist chronicle of Wykes, Rishanger's fragment published by the Camden Society, and a chronicle of Bartholomew de Cotton, which is contemporary from 1264 to 1298. Where the chronicles fail however the public documents of the realm become of high importance. The "Royal Letters" (1216—1272) which have been printed from the Patent Rolls by Professor Shirley (Rolls Series) throw great light on Henry's politics.

Our municipal history during this period is fully represented by that of London. For the general history of the capital the Rolls series has given us its "Liber Albus" and "Liber Custumarum," while a vivid account of its communal revolution is to be found in the "Liber de Antiquis Legibus" published by the Camden Society. A store of documents will be found in the Charter Rolls published by the Record Commission, in Brady's work on "English Boroughs," and in the

"Ordinances of English Gilds," published with a remarkable preface from the pen of Dr. Brentano by the Early English Text Society. For our religious and intellectual history materials now become abundant. Grosseteste's Letters throw light on the state of the Church and its relations with Rome; those of Adam Marsh give us interesting details of Earl Simon's relation to the religious movement of his day; and Eccleston's tract on the arrival of the Friars is embodied in the "Monumenta Franciscana." For the Universities we have the collection of materials edited by Mr. Anstey under the name of "Munimenta Academica."

With the close of Henry's reign our directly historic materials become scantier and scantier. The monastic annals we have before mentioned are supplemented by the jejune entries of Trivet and Murimuth, by the "Annales Angliæ et Scotiæ," by Rishanger's Chronicle, his "Gesta Edwardi Primi," and three fragments of his annals (all published in the Rolls Series). The portion of the so-called "Walsingham's History" which relates to this period is now attributed by Mr. Riley to Rishanger's hand. For the wars in the north and in the west we have no records from the side of the conquered. The social and physical state of Wales indeed is illustrated by the "Itinerarium" which Gerald du Barri drew up in the twelfth century, but Scotland has no contemporary chronicles for this period; the jingling rimes of Blind Harry are two hundred years later than his here, Wallace. We possess however a copious collection of State papers in the "Rotuli Scotiæ," the "Documents and Records illustrative of the History of Scotland" which were edited by Sir F. Palgrave, as well as in Rymer's *Fœdera*. For the history of our Parliament the most noteworthy materials have been collected by Professor Stubbs in his *Select Charters*, and he has added to them a short treatise called "*Modus Tenendi Parliamenti*," which may be taken as a fair account of its actual state and powers in the fourteenth century.

CHAPTER I.

JOHN.

1214—1216.

THE loss of Normandy did more than drive John from the foreign dominions of his race; it set him face to face with England itself. England was no longer a distant treasure-house from which gold could be drawn for wars along the Epte or the Loire, no longer a possession to be kept in order by wise ministers and by flying visits from its foreign King. Henceforth it was his home. It was to be ruled by his personal and continuous rule. People and sovereign were to know each other, to be brought into contact with each other as they had never been brought since the conquest of the Norman. The change in the attitude of the king was the more momentous that it took place at a time when the attitude of the country itself was rapidly changing. The Norman Conquest had given a new aspect to the land. A foreign king ruled it through foreign ministers. Foreign nobles were quartered in every manor. A military organization of the country changed while it simplified the holding of every estate. Huge castles of white stone bridled town and country; huge stone minsters told how the Norman had bridled even the Church. But the change was in great measure an external one. The real life of the nation was little affected by the shock of the Conquest. English institutions, the local, judicial, and administrative forms of the country were the same as of old. Like the English tongue they remained practically

*England
and the
Conquest.*

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 —

unaltered. For a century after the Conquest only a few new words crept in from the language of the conquerors, and so entirely did the spoken tongue of the nation at large remain unchanged that William himself tried to learn it that he might administer justice to his subjects. Even English literature, banished as it was from the court of the stranger and exposed to the fashionable rivalry of Latin scholars, survived not only in religious works, in poetic paraphrases of gospels and psalms, but in the great monument of our prose, the English Chronicle. It was not till the miserable reign of Stephen that the Chronicle died out in the Abbey of Peterborough. But the "Sayings of Ælfred" show a native literature going on through the reign of Henry the Second, and the appearance of a great work of English verse coincides in point of time with the return of John to his island realm. "There was a priest in the land whose name was Layamon; he was the son of Leovenath; may the Lord be gracious to him! He dwelt at Earnley, a noble church on the bank of Severn (good it seemed to him!) near Radstone, where he read books. It came to mind to him and in his chiefest thought that he would tell the noble deeds of England, what the men were named and whence they came who first had English land." Journeying far and wide over the country, the priest of Earnley found Bæda and Wace, the books too of St. Albin and St. Austin. "Layamon laid down these books and turned the leaves; he beheld them lovingly; may the Lord be gracious to him! Pen he took with finger and wrote a book-skin, and the true words set together, and compressed the three books into one." Layamon's church is now that of Areley, near Bewdley in Worcestershire; his poem was in fact an expansion of Wace's "Brut" with insertions from Bæda. Historically it is worthless; but as a monument of our language it is beyond all price. In more than thirty thousand lines not more than fifty Norman words are to be found. Even the old poetic tradition remains the

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 —

*English
 Patriot-
 ism.*

same. The alliterative metre of the earlier verse is still only slightly affected by riming terminations; the similes are the few natural similes of Cædmon; the battle-scenes are painted with the same rough, simple joy.

Instead of crushing England indeed the Conquest did more than any event that had gone before to build up an English people. All local distinctions, the distinction of Saxon from Mercian, of both from Northumbrian, died away beneath the common pressure of the stranger. The Conquest was hardly over when we see the rise of a new national feeling, of a new patriotism. In his quiet cell at Worcester the monk Florence strives to palliate by excuses of treason or the weakness of rulers the defeats of Englishmen by the Danes. Ælfred, the great name of the English past, gathers round him a legendary worship, and the "Sayings of Ælfred" embody the ideal of an English king. We see the new vigour drawn from this deeper consciousness of national unity in a national action which began as soon as the Conquest had given place to strife among the conquerors. A common hostility to the conquering baronage gave the nation leaders in its foreign sovereigns, and the sword which had been sheathed at Senlac was drawn for triumphs which avenged it. It was under William the Red that English soldiers shouted scorn at the Norman barons who surrendered at Rochester. It was under Henry the First that an English army faced Duke Robert and his foreign knighthood when they landed for a fresh invasion, "not fearing the Normans." It was under the same great King that Englishmen conquered Normandy in turn on the field of Tenchebray. This overthrow of the conquering baronage, this union of the conquered with the King, brought about the fusion of the conquerors in the general body of the English people. As early as the days of Henry the Second the descendants of Norman and Englishman had become indistinguishable. Both found a bond in a common English feeling and English patriotism, in a common hatred of the Angevin and Poitevin

CHAP. I. "foreigners" who streamed into England in the wake of Henry and his sons. Both had profited by the stern discipline of the Norman rule. The wretched reign of Stephen alone broke the long peace, a peace without parallel elsewhere, which in England stretched from the settlement of the Conquest to the return of John. Of her kings' forays along Norman or Aquitanian borders England heard little; she cared less. Even Richard's crusade woke little interest in his island realm. What England saw in her Kings was "the good peace they made in the land." And with peace came a stern but equitable rule, judicial and administrative reforms that carried order and justice to every corner of the land, a wealth that grew steadily in spite of heavy taxation, an immense outburst of material and intellectual activity.

The Universities.

It was with a new English people therefore that John found himself face to face. The nation which he fronted was a nation quickened with a new life and throbbing with a new energy. Not least among the signs of this energy was the upgrowth of our Universities. The establishment of the great schools which bore this name was everywhere throughout Europe a special mark of the impulse which Christendom gained from the crusades. A new fervour of study sprang up in the West from its contact with the more cultured East. Travellers like Adelard of Bath brought back the first rudiments of physical and mathematical science from the schools of Cordova or Bagdad. In the twelfth century a classical revival restored Caesar and Vergil to the list of monastic studies, and left its stamp on the pedantic style, the profuse classical quotations of writers like William of Malmesbury or John of Salisbury. The scholastic philosophy sprang up in the schools of Paris. The Roman law was revived by the imperialist doctors of Bologna. The long mental inactivity of feudal Europe broke up like ice before a summer's sun. Wandering teachers such as Lanfranc or Anselm crossed sea and land to spread the new power of knowledge. The same spirit

of restlessness, of enquiry, of impatience with the older traditions of mankind either local or intellectual that drove half Christendom to the tomb of its Lord crowded the roads with thousands of young scholars hurrying to the chosen seats where teachers were gathered together. A new power sprang up in the midst of a world which had till now recognized no power but that of sheer brute force. Poor as they were, sometimes even of servile race, the wandering scholars who lectured in every cloister were hailed as "masters" by the crowds at their feet. Abelard was a foe worthy of the threats of councils, of the thunders of the Church. The teaching of a single Lombard was of note enough in England to draw down the prohibition of a King.

Vacarius was probably a guest in the court of Archbishop Theobald where Thomas of London and John of Salisbury were already busy with the study of the Civil Law. But when he opened lectures on it at Oxford he was at once silenced by Stephen, who was at that moment at war with the Church and jealous of the power which the wreck of the royal authority was throwing into Theobald's hands. At this time Oxford stood in the first rank among English towns. Its town church of St. Martin rose from the midst of a huddled group of houses, girded in with massive walls, that lay along the dry upper ground of a low peninsula between the streams of Cherwell and the Thames. The ground fell gently on either side, eastward and westward, to these rivers; while on the south a sharper descent led down across swampy meadows to the ford from which the town drew its name and to the bridge that succeeded it. Around lay a wild forest country, moors such as Cowley and Bullingdon fringing the course of Thames, great woods of which Shotover and Bagley are the relics closing the horizon to the south and east. Though the two huge towers of its Norman castle marked the strategic importance of Oxford as commanding the river valley along which the commerce of Southern England

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mainly flowed, its walls formed the least element in the town's military strength, for on every side but the north it was guarded by the swampy meadows along Cherwell or by an intricate network of streams into which the Thames breaks among the meadows of Osney. From the midst of these meadows rose a mitred abbey of Austin Canons which with the older priory of St. Frideswide gave Oxford some ecclesiastical dignity. The residence of the Norman house of the D'Oillis within its castle, the frequent visits of English kings to a palace without its walls, the presence again and again of important Parliaments, marked its political weight within the realm. The settlement of one of the wealthiest among the English Jewries in the very heart of the town indicated, while it promoted, the activity of its trade. No place better illustrates the transformation of the land in the hands of its Norman masters, the sudden outburst of industrial effort, the sudden expansion of commerce and accumulation of wealth which followed the Conquest. To the west of the town rose one of the stateliest of English castles, and in the meadows beneath the hardly less stately abbey of Osney. In the fields to the north the last of the Norman kings raised his palace of Beaumont. In the southern quarter of the city the canons of St. Frideswide reared the church which still exists as the diocesan cathedral, while the piety of the Norman Castellans rebuilt almost all its parish churches and founded within their new castle walls the church of the Canons of St. George.

*Oxford
 Scholars*

We know nothing of the causes which drew students and teachers within the walls of Oxford. It is possible that here as elsewhere a new teacher quickened older educational foundations, and that the cloisters of Osney and St. Frideswide already possessed schools which burst into a larger life under the impulse of Vacarius. As yet however the fortunes of the University were obscured by the glories of Paris. English scholars gathered in thousands round the chairs of William of Champeaux or Abelard. The English took their place as one of the "nations" of

the French University. John of Salisbury became famous as one of the Parisian teachers. Thomas of London wandered to Paris from his school at Merton. But through the peaceful reign of Henry the Second Oxford quietly grew in numbers and repute, and forty years after the visit of Vacarius its educational position was fully established. When Gerald of Wales read his amusing *Topography of Ireland* to its students the most learned and famous of the English clergy were to be found within its walls. At the opening of the thirteenth century Oxford stood without a rival in its own country while in European celebrity it took rank with the greatest schools of the Western world. But to realize this Oxford of the past we must dismiss from our minds all recollections of the Oxford of the present. In the outer look of the new University there was nothing of the pomp that overawes the freshman as he first paces the "High" or looks down from the gallery of St. Mary's. In the stead of long fronts of venerable colleges, of stately walks beneath immemorial elms, history plunges us into the mean and filthy lanes of a mediæval town. Thousands of boys, huddled in bare lodging-houses, clustering round teachers as poor as themselves in church porch and house porch, drinking, quarrelling, dicing, begging at the corners of the streets, take the place of the brightly-coloured train of doctors and Heads. Mayor and Chancellor struggled in vain to enforce order or peace on this seething mass of turbulent life. The retainers who followed their young lords to the University fought out the feuds of their houses in the streets. Scholars from Kent and scholars from Scotland waged the bitter struggle of North and South. At nightfall roysterer and reveller roamed with torches through the narrow lanes, defying bailiffs, and cutting down burghers at their doors. Now a mob of clerks plunged into the Jewry and wiped off the memory of bills and bonds by sacking a Hebrew house or two. Now a tavern squabble between scholar and townsman widened into a general broil, and the academical

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Edmund
Rich.

bell of St. Mary's vied with the town bell of St. Martin's in clanging to arms. Every phase of ecclesiastical controversy or political strife was preluded by some fierce outbreak in this turbulent, surging mob. When England growled at the exactions of the Papacy in the years that were to follow the students besieged a legate in the abbot's house at Osney. A murderous town and gown row preceded the opening of the Barons' War. "When Oxford draws knife," ran an old rime, "England's soon at strife."

But the turbulence and stir was a stir and turbulence of life. A keen thirst for knowledge, a passionate poetry of devotion, gathered thousands round the poorest scholar and welcomed the barefoot friar. Edmund Rich—Archbishop of Canterbury and saint in later days—came about the time we have reached to Oxford, a boy of twelve years old, from a little lane at Abingdon that still bears his name. He found his school in an inn that belonged to the abbey of Eynsham where his father had taken refuge from the world. His mother was a pious woman of the day, too poor to give her boy much outfit besides the hair shirt that he promised to wear every Wednesday; but Edmund was no poorer than his neighbours. He plunged at once into the nobler life of the place, its ardour for knowledge, its mystical piety. "Secretly," perhaps at eventide when the shadows were gathering in the church of St. Mary and the crowd of teachers and students had left its aisles, the boy stood before an image of the Virgin, and placing a ring of gold upon its finger took Mary for his bride. Years of study, broken by a fever that raged among the crowded, noisome streets, brought the time for completing his education at Paris; and Edmund, hand in hand with a brother Robert of his, begged his way as poor scholars were wont to the great school of Western Christendom. Here a damsel, heedless of his tonsure, wooed him so pertinaciously that Edmund consented at last to an assignation; but when he appeared it was in company of grave academical officials who, as the maiden declared in

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the hour of penitence which followed, "straightway whipped the offending Eve out of her." Still true to his Virgin bridal, Edmund on his return from Paris became the most popular of Oxford teachers. It is to him that Oxford owes her first introduction to the Logic of Aristotle. We see him in the little room which he hired, with the Virgin's chapel hard by, his grey gown reaching to his feet, ascetic in his devotion, falling asleep in lecture time after a sleepless night of prayer, but gifted with a grace and cheerfulness of manner which told of his French training and a chivalrous love of knowledge that let his pupils pay what they would. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the young tutor would say, a touch of scholarly pride perhaps mingling with his contempt of worldly things, as he threw down the fee on the dusty window-ledge whence a thievish student would sometimes run off with it. But even knowledge brought its troubles; the Old Testament, which with a copy of the Decretals long formed his sole library, frowned down upon a love of secular learning from which Edmund found it hard to wean himself. At last, in some hour of dream, the form of his dead mother floated into the room where the teacher stood among his mathematical diagrams. "What are these?" she seemed to say; and seizing Edmund's right hand, she drew on the palm three circles interlaced, each of which bore the name of a Person of the Christian Trinity. "Be these," she cried, as the figure faded away, "thy diagrams henceforth, my son."

The story admirably illustrates the real character of the new training, and the latent opposition between the spirit of the Universities and the spirit of the Church. The feudal and ecclesiastical order of the old mediæval world were both alike threatened by this power that had so strangely sprung up in the midst of them. Feudalism rested on local isolation, on the severance of kingdom from kingdom and barony from barony, on the distinction of blood and race, on the supremacy of material or brute force, on an allegiance determined by accidents of place

*The
University
and
Feudalism.*

CHAP. I. and social position. The University on the other hand
 John. was a protest against this isolation of man from man. The
 1214- smallest school was European and not local. Not merely
 1216. every province of France, but every people of Christendom
 had its place among the "nations" of Paris or Padua. A
 common language, the Latin tongue, superseded within
 academical bounds the warring tongues of Europe. A
 common intellectual kinship and rivalry took the place of
 the petty strifes which parted province from province or
 realm from realm. What Church and Empire had both
 aimed at and both failed in, the knitting of Christian
 nations together into a vast commonwealth, the Universi-
 ties for a time actually did. Dante felt himself as little a
 stranger in the "Latin" quarter round Mont St. Geneviève
 as under the arches of Bologna. Wandering Oxford
 scholars carried the writings of Wyclif to the libraries of
 Prague. In England the work of provincial fusion was
 less difficult or important than elsewhere, but even in
 England work had to be done. The feuds of Northerner
 and Southerner which so long disturbed the discipline of
 Oxford witnessed at any rate to the fact that Northerner
 and Southerner had at last been brought face to face in its
 streets. And here as elsewhere the spirit of national isola-
 tion was held in check by the larger comprehensiveness of
 the University. After the dissensions that threatened the
 prosperity of Paris in the thirteenth century Norman and
 Gascon mingled with Englishmen in Oxford lecture-halls.
 Irish scholars were foremost in the fray with the legate.
 At a later time the rising of Owen Glyndwr found
 hundreds of Welshmen gathered round its teachers. And
 within this strangely mingled mass society and govern-
 ment rested on a purely democratic basis. Among Oxford
 scholars the son of the noble stood on precisely the
 same footing with the poorest mendicant. Wealth, phy-
 sical strength, skill in arms, pride of ancestry and blood,
 the very grounds on which feudal society rested, went for
 nothing in the lecture-room. The University was a state

absolutely self-governed, and whose citizens were admitted
 by a purely intellectual franchise. Knowledge made the
 "master." To know more than one's fellows was a man's
 sole claim to be a regent or "ruler" in the schools. And
 within this intellectual aristocracy all were equal. When
 the free commonwealth of the masters gathered in the aisles
 of St. Mary's all had an equal right to counsel, all had an
 equal vote in the final decision. Treasury and library were
 at their complete disposal. It was their voice that named
 every officer, that proposed and sanctioned every statute.
 Even the Chancellor, their head, who had at first been an
 officer of the Bishop, became an elected officer of their own.

If the democratic spirit of the Universities threatened
 feudalism, their spirit of intellectual enquiry threatened
 the Church. To all outer seeming they were purely eccle-
 siastical bodies. The wide extension which mediæval
 usage gave to the word "orders" gathered the whole
 educated world within the pale of the clergy. What-
 ever might be their age or proficiency, scholar and
 teacher alike ranked as clerks, free from lay respon-
 sibilities or the control of civil tribunals, and ame-
 nable only to the rule of the Bishop and the sentence of
 his spiritual courts. This ecclesiastical character of the
 University appeared in that of its head. The Chancellor, as
 we have seen, was at first no officer of the University itself,
 but of the ecclesiastical body under whose shadow it had
 sprung into life. At Oxford he was simply the local officer
 of the Bishop of Lincoln within whose immense diocese
 the University was then situated. But this identification
 in outer form with the Church only rendered more con-
 spicuous the difference of spirit between them. The
 sudden expansion of the field of education diminished the
 importance of those purely ecclesiastical and theological
 studies which had hitherto absorbed the whole intellectual
 energies of mankind. The revival of classical literature,
 the rediscovery as it were of an older and a greater world,
 the contact with a larger, freer life whether in mind, in

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*The Uni-
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society, or in politics introduced a spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of denial into the realms of unquestioning belief. Abelard claimed for reason a supremacy over faith. Florentine poets discussed with a smile the immortality of the soul. Even to Dante, while he censures these, Vergil is as sacred as Jeremiah. The imperial ruler in whom the new culture took its most notable form, Frederick the Second, the "World's Wonder" of his time, was regarded by half Europe as no better than an infidel. A faint revival of physical science, so long crushed as magic by the dominant ecclesiasticism, brought Christians into perilous contact with the Moslem and the Jew. The books of the Rabbis were no longer an accursed thing to Roger Bacon. The scholars of Cordova were no mere Paynim swine to Adelard of Bath. How slowly indeed and against what obstacles science won its way we know from the witness of Roger Bacon. "Slowly," he tells us, "has any portion of the philosophy of Aristotle come into use among the Latins. His Natural Philosophy and his Metaphysics, with the Commentaries of Averroes and others, were translated in my time, and interdicted at Paris up to the year of grace 1237 because of their assertion of the eternity of the world and of time and because of the book of the divinations by dreams (which is the third book, *De Somniis et Vigiliis*) and because of many passages erroneously translated. Even his logic was slowly received and lectured on. For St. Edmund, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the first in my time who read the Elements at Oxford. And I have seen Master Hugo, who first read the book of Posterior Analytics and I have seen his writing. So there were but few, considering the multitude of the Latins, who were of any account in the philosophy of Aristotle; nay, very few indeed, and scarcely any up to this year of grace 1292."

*The
Town.*

If we pass from the English University to the English Town we see a progress as important and hardly less interesting. In their origin our boroughs were utterly unlike

those of the rest of the western world. The cities of Italy and Provence had preserved the municipal institutions of their Roman past; the German towns had been founded by Henry the Fowler with the purpose of sheltering industry from the feudal oppression around them; the communes of Northern France sprang into existence in revolt against feudal outrage within their walls. But in England the tradition of Rome passed utterly away, while feudal oppression was held fairly in check by the Crown. The English town therefore was in its beginning simply a piece of the general country, organized and governed precisely in the same manner as the townships around it. Its existence witnessed indeed to the need which men felt in those earlier times of mutual help and protection. The burh or borough was probably a more defensible place than the common village; it may have had a ditch or mound about it instead of the quickset-hedge or "tun" from which the township took its name. But in itself it was simply a township or group of townships where men clustered whether for trade or defence more thickly than elsewhere. The towns were different in the circumstances and date of their rise. Some grew up in the fortified camps of the English invaders. Some dated from a later occupation of the sacked and desolate Roman towns. Some clustered round the country houses of king and ealdorman or the walls of church and monastery. Towns like Bristol were the direct result of trade. There was the same variety in the mode in which the various town communities were formed. While the bulk of them grew by simple increase of population from township to town, larger boroughs such as York with its "six shires" or London with its wards and soke and franchises show how families and groups of settlers settled down side by side, and claimed as they coalesced, each for itself, its shire or share of the town-ground while jealously preserving its individual life within the town-community. But strange as these aggregations might be, the constitution of the borough which resulted from them

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was simply that of the people at large. Whether we regard it as a township, or rather from its size as a hundred or collection of townships, the obligations of the dwellers within its bounds were those of the townships round, to keep fence and trench in good repair, to send a contingent to the fyrd, and a reeve and four men to the hundred court and shire court. As in other townships land was a necessary accompaniment of freedom. The landless man who dwelled in a borough had no share in its corporate life; for purposes of government or property the town consisted simply of the landed proprietors within its bounds. The common lands which are still attached to many of our boroughs take us back to a time when each township lay within a ring or mark of open ground which served at once as boundary and pasture land. Each of the four wards of York had its common pasture; Oxford has still its own "Portmeadow."

*Towns
and their
lords.*

The inner rule of the borough lay as in the townships about it in the hands of its own freemen, gathered in "borough-moot" or "portmannimote." But the social change brought about by the Danish wars, the legal requirement that each man should have a lord, affected the towns as it affected the rest of the country. Some passed into the hands of great thegns near to them; the bulk became known as in the demesne of the king. A new officer, the lord's or king's reeve, was a sign of this revolution. It was the reeve who now summoned the borough-moot and administered justice in it; it was he who collected the lord's dues or annual rent of the town, and who exacted the services it owed to its lord. To modern eyes these services would imply almost complete subjection. When Leicester, for instance, passed from the hands of the Conqueror into those of its Earls, its townsmen were bound to reap their lord's corn-crops, to grind at his mill, to redeem their strayed cattle from his pound. The great forest around was the Earl's, and it was only out of his grace that the little borough could drive its swine into the woods or pasture

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its cattle in the glades. The justice and government of a town lay wholly in its master's hands; he appointed its bailiffs, received the fines and forfeitures of his tenants, and the fees and tolls of their markets and fairs. But in fact when once these dues were paid and these services rendered the English townsman was practically free. His rights were as rigidly defined by custom as those of his lord. Property and person alike were secured against arbitrary seizure. He could demand a fair trial on any charge, and even if justice was administered by his master's reeve it was administered in the presence and with the assent of his fellow-townsmen. The bell which swung out from the town tower gathered the burgesses to a common meeting, where they could exercise rights of free speech and free deliberation on their own affairs. Their merchant-gild over its ale-feast regulated trade, distributed the sums due from the town among the different burgesses, looked to the due repairs of gate and wall, and acted in fact pretty much the same part as a town-council of to-day.

The merchant-gild was the outcome of a tendency to closer association which found support in those principles of mutual aid and mutual restraint that lay at the base of our old institutions. Gilds or clubs for religious, charitable, or social purposes were common throughout the country, and especially common in boroughs, where men clustered more thickly together. Each formed a sort of artificial family. An oath of mutual fidelity among its members was substituted for the tie of blood, while the gild-feast, held once a month in the common hall, replaced the gathering of the kinsfolk round their family hearth. But within this new family the aim of the gild was to establish a mutual responsibility as close as that of the old. "Let all share the same lot," ran its law; "if any misdo, let all bear it." A member could look for aid from his gild-brothers in atoning for guilt incurred by mishap. He could call on them for assistance in case of

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Merchant
Gild.*

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violence or wrong. If falsely accused they appeared in court as his compurgators, if poor they supported, and when dead they buried him. On the other hand he was responsible to them, as they were to the State, for order and obedience to the laws. A wrong of brother against brother was also a wrong against the general body of the gild and was punished by fine or in the last resort by an expulsion which left the offender a "lawless" man and an outcast. The one difference between these gilds in country and town was this, that in the latter case from their close local neighbourhood they tended inevitably to coalesce. Under Æthelstan the London gilds united into one for the purpose of carrying out more effectually their common aims, and at a later time we find the gilds of Berwick enacting "that where many bodies are found side by side in one place they may become one, and have one will, and in the dealings of one with another have a strong and hearty love." The process was probably a long and difficult one, for the brotherhoods naturally differed much in social rank, and even after the union was effected we see traces of the separate existence to a certain extent of some one or more of the wealthier or more aristocratic gilds. In London for instance the Knighten-gild which seems to have stood at the head of its fellows retained for a long time its separate property, while its Alderman—as the chief officer of each gild was called—became the Alderman of the united gild of the whole city. In Canterbury we find a similar gild of Thanets from which the chief officers of the town seem commonly to have been selected. Imperfect however as the union might be, when once it was effected the town passed from a mere collection of brotherhoods into a powerful community, far more effectually organized than in the loose organization of the township, and whose character was inevitably determined by the circumstances of its origin. In their beginnings our boroughs seem to have been mainly gatherings of persons engaged in agricultural pursuits; the first Doms of London provide especially for the recovery

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of cattle belonging to the citizens. But as the increasing security of the country invited the farmer or the landowner to settle apart in his own fields, and the growth of estate and trade told on the towns themselves, the difference between town and country became more sharply defined. London of course took the lead in this new development of civic life. Even in Æthelstan's day every London merchant who had made three long voyages on his own account ranked as a Thegn. Its "lithsmen," or shipman's-gild, were of sufficient importance under Harthacnut to figure in the election of a king, and its principal street still tells of the rapid growth of trade in its name of 'Cheap-side' or the bargaining place. But at the Norman Conquest the commercial tendency had become universal. The name given to the united brotherhood in a borough is in almost every case no longer that of the 'town-gild,' but of the 'merchant-gild.'

This social change in the character of the townsmen produced important results in the character of their municipal institutions. In becoming a merchant-gild the body of citizens who formed the "town" enlarged their powers of civic legislation by applying them to the control of their internal trade. It became their special business to obtain from the crown or from their lords wider commercial privileges, rights of coinage, grants of fairs, and exemption from tolls, while within the town itself they framed regulations as to the sale and quality of goods, the control of markets, and the recovery of debts. It was only by slow and difficult advances that each step in this securing of privilege was won. Still it went steadily on. Whenever we get a glimpse of the inner history of an English town we find the same peaceful revolution in progress, services disappearing through disuse or omission, while privileges and immunities are being purchased in hard cash. The lord of the town, whether he were king, baron, or abbot, was commonly thriftless or poor, and the capture of a noble, or the campaign of a sovereign, or the

*Emanci-
pation of
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building of some new minster by a prior, brought about an appeal to the thrifty burghers, who were ready to fill again their master's treasury at the price of the strip of parchment which gave them freedom of trade, of justice, and of government. In the silent growth and elevation of the English people the boroughs thus led the way. Unnoticed and despised by prelate and noble they preserved or won back again the full tradition of Teutonic liberty. The right of self-government, the right of free speech in free meeting, the right to equal justice at the hands of one's equals, were brought safely across ages of tyranny by the burghers and shopkeepers of the towns. In the quiet quaintly-named streets, in town-mead and market-place, in the lord's mill beside the stream, in the bell that swung out its summons to the crowded borough-mote, in merchant-gild, and church-gild and craft-gild, lay the life of Englishmen who were doing more than knight and baron to make England what she is, the life of their home and their trade, of their sturdy battle with oppression, their steady, ceaseless struggle for right and freedom.

London. London stood first among English towns, and the privileges which its citizens won became precedents for the burghers of meaner boroughs. Even at the Conquest its power and wealth secured it a full recognition of all its ancient privileges from the Conqueror. In one way indeed it profited by the revolution which laid England at the feet of the stranger. One immediate result of William's success was an immigration into England from the Continent. A peaceful invasion of the Norman traders followed quick on the invasion of the Norman soldiery. Every Norman noble as he quartered himself upon English lands, every Norman abbot as he entered his English cloister, gathered French artists, French shopkeepers, French domestics about him. Round the Abbey of Battle which William founded on the site of his great victory "Gilbert the Foreigner, Gilbert the Weaver, Benet the Steward, Hugh the Secretary, Baldwin the Tailor," dwelt mixed with the

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English tenantry. But nowhere did these immigrants play so notable a part as in London. The Normans had had mercantile establishments in London as early as the reign of Æthelred, if not of Eadgar. Such settlements however naturally formed nothing more than a trading colony like the colony of the "Emperor's Men," or Easterlings. But with the Conquest their number greatly increased. "Many of the citizens of Rouen and Caen passed over thither, preferring to be dwellers in this city, inasmuch as it was fitter for their trading and better stored with the merchandize in which they were wont to traffic." The status of these traders indeed had wholly changed. They could no longer be looked upon as strangers in cities which had passed under the Norman rule. In some cases, as at Norwich, the French colony isolated itself in a separate French town, side by side with the English borough. But in London it seems to have taken at once the position of a governing class. Gilbert Beket, the father of the famous Archbishop, was believed in later days to have been one of the portreeves of London, the predecessors of its mayors; he held in Stephen's time a large property in houses within the walls, and a proof of his civic importance was preserved in the annual visit of each newly-elected chief magistrate to his tomb in a little chapel which he had founded in the churchyard of St. Paul's. Yet Gilbert was one of the Norman strangers who followed in the wake of the Conqueror; he was by birth a burgher of Rouen, as his wife was of a burgher family from Caen.

It was partly to this infusion of foreign blood, partly no doubt to the long internal peace and order secured by the Norman rule, that London owed the wealth and importance to which it attained during the reign of Henry the First. The charter which Henry granted it became a model for lesser boroughs. The King yielded its citizens the right of justice; each townsman could claim to be tried by his fellow-townsmen in the town-court or hustings whose sessions took place every week. They

*Freedom
of
London.*

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were subject only to the old English trial by oath, and exempt from the trial by battle which the Normans introduced. Their trade was protected from toll or exaction over the length and breadth of the land. The King however still nominated in London as elsewhere the portreeve, or magistrate of the town, nor were the citizens as yet united together in a commune or corporation. But an imperfect civic organization existed in the "wards" or quarters of the town, each governed by its own alderman, and in the "gilds" or voluntary associations of merchants or traders which ensured order and mutual protection for their members. Loose too as these bonds may seem, they were drawn firmly together by the older English traditions of freedom which the towns preserved. The London burgesses gathered in their town-mote when the bell swung out from the bell-tower of St. Paul's to deliberate freely on their own affairs under the presidency of their alderman. Here too they mustered in arms if danger threatened the city, and delivered the town-banner to their captain, the Norman baron Fitz-Walter, to lead them against the enemy.

*Early
Oxford.*

Few boroughs had as yet attained to such power as this, but the instance of Oxford shows how the freedom of London told on the general advance of English towns. In spite of antiquarian fancies it is certain that no town had arisen on the site of Oxford for centuries after the withdrawal of the Roman legions from the isle of Britain. Though the monastery of St. Frideswide rose in the turmoil of the eighth century on the slope which led down to a ford across the Thames, it is long before we get a glimpse of the borough that must have grown up under its walls. The first definite evidence for its existence lies in a brief entry of the English Chronicle which recalls its seizure by Eadward the Elder, but the form of this entry shows that the town was already a considerable one, and in the last wrestle of England with the Dane its position on the borders of Mercia and Wessex combined with its com-

mand of the upper valley of the Thames to give it military and political importance. Of the life of its burgesses however we still know little or nothing. The names of its parishes, St. Aldate, St. Ebbe, St. Mildred, St. Edmund, show how early church after church gathered round the earlier town-church of St. Martin. But the men of the little town remain dim to us. Their town-mote, or the "Portmannimote" as it was called, which was held in the churchyard of St. Martin, still lives in a shadow of its older self as the Freeman's Common Hall—their town-mead is still the Port-meadow. But it is only by later charters or the record of Domesday that we see them going on pilgrimage to the shrines of Winchester, or chaffering in their market-place, or judging and law-making in their hustings, their merchant-gild regulating trade, their reeve gathering his king's dues of tax or money or marshalling his troop of burghers for the king's wars, their boats paying toll of a hundred herrings in Lent-tide to the Abbot of Abingdon, as they floated down the Thames towards London.

The number of houses marked waste in the survey marks the terrible suffering of Oxford in the Norman Conquest: but the ruin was soon repaired, and the erection of its castle, the rebuilding of its churches, the planting of a Jewry in the heart of the town, showed in what various ways the energy of its new masters was giving an impulse to its life. It is a proof of the superiority of the Hebrew dwellings to the Christian houses about them that each of the later town-halls of the borough had, before their expulsion, been houses of Jews. Nearly all the larger dwelling houses in fact which were subsequently converted into academic halls bore traces of the same origin in names such as Moysey's Hall, Lombard's Hall, or Jacob's Hall. The Jewish houses were abundant, for besides the greater Jewry in the heart of it, there was a lesser Jewry scattered over its southern quarter, and we can hardly doubt that this abundance of substantial

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buildings in the town was at least one of the causes which drew teachers and scholars within its walls. The Jewry, a town within a town, lay here as elsewhere isolated and exempt from the common justice, the common life and self-government of the borough. On all but its eastern side too the town was hemmed in by jurisdictions independent of its own. The precincts of the Abbey of Osney, the wide "bailey" of the Castle, bounded it narrowly on the west. To the north, stretching away beyond the little church of St. Giles, lay the fields of the royal manor of Beaumont. The Abbot of Abingdon, whose woods of Cumnor and Bagley closed the southern horizon, held his leet-court in the hamlet of Grampound beyond the bridge. Nor was the whole space within the walls subject to the self-government of the citizens. The Jewry had a rule and law of its own. Scores of householders, dotted over street and lane, were tenants of castle or abbey and paid no suit or service at the borough court.

Oxford
and
London.

But within these narrow bounds and amidst these various obstacles the spirit of municipal liberty lived a life the more intense that it was so closely cabined and confined. Nowhere indeed was the impulse which London was giving likely to tell with greater force. The "bargemen" of Oxford were connected even before the Conquest with the "boatmen," or shippers, of the capital. In both cases it is probable that the bodies bearing these names represented what is known as the merchant-gild of the town. Royal recognition enables us to trace the merchant-gild of Oxford from the time of Henry the First. Even then lands, islands, pastures belonged to it, and amongst them the same Port-meadow which is familiar to Oxford men pulling lazily on a summer's noon to Godstow. The connexion between the two gilds was primarily one of trade. "In the time of King Eadward and Abbot Ordric" the channel of the Thames beneath the walls of the Abbey of Abingdon became so blocked up that boats could scarce pass as far as Oxford, and it was at the joint prayer of the

burgesses of London and Oxford that the abbot dug a new channel through the meadow to the south of his church. But by the time of Henry the Second closer bonds than this linked the two cities together. In case of any doubt or contest about judgements in their own court the burgesses of Oxford were empowered to refer the matter to the decision of London, "and whatsoever the citizens of London shall adjudge in such cases shall be deemed right." The judicial usages, the municipal rights of each city were assimilated by Henry's charter. "Of whatsoever matter the men of Oxford be put in plea, they shall deraign themselves according to the law and custom of the city of London and not otherwise, because they and the citizens of London are of one and the same custom, law, and liberty."

A legal connexion such as this could hardly fail to bring with it an identity of municipal rights. Oxford had already passed through the earlier steps of her advance towards municipal freedom before the conquest of the Norman. Her burghers assembled in their own Portmannimote, and their dues to the crown were assessed at a fixed sum of honey or coin. But the formal definition of their rights dates, as in the case of London, from the time of Henry the First. The customs and exemptions of its townsmen were confirmed by Henry the Second "as ever they enjoyed them in the time of Henry my grandfather, and in like manner as my citizens of London hold them." By this date the town had attained entire judicial and commercial freedom, and liberty of external commerce was secured by the exemption of its citizens from toll on the king's lands. Complete independence was reached when a charter of John substituted a mayor of the town's own choosing for the reeve or bailiff of the crown. But dry details such as these tell little of the quick pulse of popular life that beat in the thirteenth century through such a community as that of Oxford. The church of St. Martin in the very heart of it, at the "Quatrevoix" or Carfax

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*Life of the
Town.*

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where its four streets met, was the centre of the city life. The town-mote was held in its churchyard. Justice was administered ere yet a townhall housed the infant magistracy by mayor or bailiff sitting beneath a low pent-house, the "penniless bench" of later days, outside its eastern wall. Its bell summoned the burghers to council or arms. Around the church the trade-gilds were ranged as in some vast encampment. To the south of it lay Spicery and Vintnery, the quarter of the richer burgesses. Fish-street fell noisily down to the bridge and the ford. The Corn-market occupied then as now the street which led to Northgate. The stalls of the butchers stretched along the "Butcher-row," which formed the road to the bailey and the castle. Close beneath the church lay a nest of huddled lanes, broken by a stately synagogue, and traversed from time to time by the yellow gaberdine of the Jew. Soldiers from the castle rode clashing through the narrow streets; the bells of Osney clanged from the swampy meadows; processions of pilgrims wound through gates and lane to the shrine of St. Frideswide. Frays were common enough; now the sack of a Jew's house; now burgher drawing knife on burgher; now an outbreak of the young student lads who were growing every day in numbers and audacity. But as yet the town was well in hand. The clang of the city bell called every citizen to his door; the call of the mayor brought trade after trade with bow in hand and banners flying to enforce the king's peace.

St.
Edmunds-
bury.

The advance of towns which had grown up not on the royal domain but around abbey or castle was slower and more difficult. The story of St. Edmundsbury shows how gradual was the transition from pure serfage to an imperfect freedom. Much that had been plough-land here in the Confessor's time was covered with houses by the time of Henry the Second. The building of the great abbey-church drew its craftsmen and masons to mingle with the ploughmen and reapers of the Abbot's domain. The troubles of the time helped here as elsewhere the

progress of the town; serfs, fugitives from justice or their lord, the trader, the Jew, naturally sought shelter under the strong hand of St. Edmund. But the settlers were wholly at the Abbot's mercy. Not a settler but was bound to pay his pence to the Abbot's treasury, to plough a rood of his land, to reap in his harvest-field, to fold his sheep in the Abbey folds, to help bring the annual catch of eels from the Abbey waters. Within the four crosses that bounded the Abbot's domain land and water were his; the cattle of the townsmen paid for their pasture on the common; if the fullers refused the loan of their cloth the cellarer would refuse the use of the stream and seize their looms wherever he found them. No toll might be levied from tenants of the Abbey farms, and customers had to wait before shop and stall till the buyers of the Abbot had had the pick of the market. There was little chance of redress, for if burghers complained in folk-mote it was before the Abbot's officers that its meeting was held; if they appealed to the alderman he was the Abbot's nominee and received the horn, the symbol of his office, at the Abbot's hands. Like all the greater revolutions of society, the advance from this mere serfage was a silent one; indeed its more galling instances of oppression seem to have slipped unconsciously away. Some, like the eel-fishing, were commuted for an easy rent; others, like the slavery of the fullers and the toll of flax, simply disappeared. By usage, by omission, by downright forgetfulness, here by a little struggle, there by a present to a needy abbot, the town won freedom.

But progress was not always unconscious, and one incident in the history of St. Edmundsbury is remarkable, not merely as indicating the advance of law, but yet more as marking the part which a new moral sense of man's right to equal justice was to play in the general advance of the realm. Rude as the borough was, it possessed the right of meeting in full assembly of the townsmen for government and law. Justice was administered in presence of the

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Justice.*

CHAP. I. burgesses, and the accused acquitted or condemned by the oath of his neighbours. Without the borough bounds however the system of Norman judicature prevailed; and the rural tenants who did suit and service at the Cellerar's court were subjected to the trial by battle. The execution of a farmer named Kebel who came under this feudal jurisdiction brought the two systems into vivid contrast. Kebel seems to have been guiltless of the crime laid to his charge; but the duel went against him and he was hung just without the gates. The taunts of the townsmen woke his fellow farmers to a sense of wrong. "Had Kebel been a dweller within the borough," said the burgesses, "he would have got his acquittal from the oaths of his neighbours, as our liberty is;" and even the monks were moved to a decision that their tenants should enjoy equal freedom and justice with the townsmen. The franchise of the town was extended to the rural possessions of the Abbey without it; the farmers "came to the toll-house, were written in the alderman's toll, and paid the town-penny." A chance story preserved in a charter of later date shows the same struggle for justice going on in a greater town. At Leicester the trial by compurgation, the rough predecessor of trial by jury, had been abolished by the Earls in favour of trial by battle. The aim of the burgesses was to regain their old justice, and in this a touching incident at last made them successful. "It chanced that two kinsmen, Nicholas the son of Acon and Geoffrey the son of Nicholas, waged a duel about a certain piece of land concerning which a dispute had arisen between them; and they fought from the first to the ninth hour, each conquering by turns. Then one of them fleeing from the other till he came to a certain little pit, as he stood on the brink of the pit and was about to fall therein, his kinsman said to him 'Take care of the pit, turn back, lest thou shouldest fall into it.' Thereat so much clamour and noise was made by the bystanders and those who were sitting around that the

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Earl heard these clamours as far off as the castle, and he enquired of some how it was there was such a clamour, and answer was made to him that two kinsmen were fighting about a certain piece of ground, and that one had fled till he reached a certain little pit, and that as he stood over the pit and was about to fall into it the other warned him. Then the townsmen being moved with pity, made a covenant with the Earl that they should give him threepence yearly for each house in the High Street that had a gable, on condition that he should grant to them that the twenty-four jurors who were in Leicester from ancient times should from that time forward discuss and decide all pleas they might have among themselves."

At the time we have reached this struggle for emancipation was nearly over. The larger towns had secured the privilege of self-government, the administration of justice, and the control of their own trade. The reigns of Richard and John mark the date in our municipal history at which towns began to acquire the right of electing their own chief magistrate, the Portreeve or Mayor, who had till then been a nominee of the crown. But with the close of this outer struggle opened an inner struggle between the various classes of the townsmen themselves. The growth of wealth and industry was bringing with it a vast increase of population. The mass of the new settlers, composed as they were of escaped serfs, of traders without landed holdings, of families who had lost their original lot in the borough, and generally of the artizans and the poor, had no part in the actual life of the town. The right of trade and of the regulation of trade in common with all other forms of jurisdiction lay wholly in the hands of the landed burghers whom we have described. By a natural process too their superiority in wealth produced a fresh division between the "burghers" of the merchant-gild and the unenfranchised mass around them. The same change which severed at Florence the seven Greater Arts or trades from the fourteen Lesser Arts, and which raised the three

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*Division
of labour.*

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occupations of banking, the manufacture and the dyeing of cloth, to a position of superiority even within the privileged circle of the seven, told though with less force on the English boroughs. The burghers of the merchant-gild gradually concentrated themselves on the greater operations of commerce, on trades which required a larger capital, while the meaner employments of general traffic were abandoned to their poorer neighbours. This advance in the division of labour is marked by such severances as we note in the thirteenth century of the cloth merchant from the tailor or the leather merchant from the butcher.

*Trade
 Gilds.*

But the result of this severance was all-important in its influence on the constitution of our towns. The members of the trades thus abandoned by the wealthier burghers formed themselves into Craft-gilds which soon rose into dangerous rivalry with the original Merchant-gild of the town. A seven years' apprenticeship formed the necessary prelude to full membership of these trade-gilds. Their regulations were of the minutest character; the quality and value of work were rigidly prescribed, the hours of toil fixed "from day-break to curfew," and strict provision made against competition in labour. At each meeting of these gilds their members gathered round the Craft-box which contained the rules of their Society, and stood with bared heads as it was opened. The warden and a quorum of gild-brothers formed a court which enforced the ordinances of the gild, inspected all work done by its members, confiscated unlawful tools or unworthy goods; and disobedience to their orders was punished by fines or in the last resort by expulsion, which involved the loss of a right to trade. A common fund was raised by contributions among the members, which not only provided for the trade objects of the gild but sufficed to found chantries and masses and set up painted windows in the church of their patron saint. Even at the present day the arms of a craft-gild may often be seen blazoned in cathedrals side by side with those of prelates and of kings. But it was only by slow degrees that

they rose to such a height as this. The first steps in their existence were the most difficult, for to enable a trade-gild to carry out its objects with any success it was first necessary that the whole body of craftsmen belonging to the trade should be compelled to join the gild, and secondly that a legal control over the trade itself should be secured to it. A royal charter was indispensable for these purposes, and over the grant of these charters took place the first struggle with the merchant-gilds which had till then solely exercised jurisdiction over trade within the boroughs. The weavers, who were the first trade-gild to secure royal sanction in the reign of Henry the First, were still engaged in a contest for existence as late as the reign of John when the citizens of London bought for a time the suppression of their gild. Even under the House of Lancaster Exeter was engaged in resisting the establishment of a tailor's gild. From the eleventh century however the spread of these societies went steadily on, and the control of trade passed more and more from the merchant-gilds to the craft-gilds.

It is this struggle, to use the technical terms of the time, of the "greater folk" against the "lesser folk," or of the "commune," the general mass of the inhabitants, against the "prudhommes," or "wiser" few, which brought about, as it passed from the regulation of trade to the general government of the town, the great civic revolution of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. On the Continent, and especially along the Rhine, the struggle was as fierce as the supremacy of the older burghers had been complete. In Köln the craftsmen had been reduced to all but serfage, and the merchant of Brussels might box at his will the ears of "the man without heart or honour who lives by his toil." Such social tyranny of class over class brought a century of bloodshed to the cities of Germany; but in England the tyranny of class over class was restrained by the general tenor of the law, and the revolution took for the most part a milder form. The longest and bitterest strife of all was naturally at London. Nowhere had the territorial

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*Greater
 and Lesser
 Folk..*

CHAP. I. constitution struck root so deeply, and nowhere had the landed oligarchy risen to such a height of wealth and influence. The city was divided into wards, each of which was governed by an alderman drawn from the ruling class. In some indeed the office seems to have become hereditary. The "magnates," or "barons," of the merchant-gild advised alone on all matters of civic government or trade regulation, and distributed or assessed at their will the revenues or burthens of the town. Such a position afforded an opening for corruption and oppression of the most galling kind; and it seems to have been a general impression of the unfair assessment of the dues levied on the poor and the undue burthens which were thrown on the unenfranchised classes which provoked the first serious discontent. In the reign of Richard the First William of the Long Beard, though one of the governing body, placed himself at the head of a conspiracy which in the panic-stricken fancy of the burghers numbered fifty thousand of the craftsmen. His eloquence, his bold defiance of the aldermen in the town-mote, gained him at any rate a wide popularity, and the crowds who surrounded him hailed him as "the saviour of the poor." One of his addresses is luckily preserved to us by a hearer of the time. In mediæval fashion he began with a text from the Vulgate, "Ye shall draw water with joy from the fountain of the Saviour." "I," he began, "am the saviour of the poor. Ye poor men who have felt the weight of rich men's hands, draw from my fountain waters of wholesome instruction and that with joy, for the time of your visitation is at hand. For I will divide the waters from the waters. It is the people who are the waters, and I will divide the lowly and faithful folk from the proud and faithless folk; I will part the chosen from the reprobate as light from darkness." But it was in vain that he strove to win royal favour for the popular cause. The support of the moneyed classes was essential to Richard in the costly wars with Philip of France; and the Justiciar, Archbishop Hubert, after a moment of hesitation issued orders for William

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Longbeard's arrest. William felled with an axe the first soldier who advanced to seize him, and taking refuge with a few adherents in the tower of St. Mary-le-Bow summoned his adherents to rise. Hubert however, who had already flooded the city with troops, with bold contempt of the right of sanctuary set fire to the tower. William was forced to surrender, and a burgher's son, whose father he had slain, stabbed him as he came forth. With his death the quarrel slumbered for more than fifty years. But the movement towards equality went steadily on. Under pretext of preserving the peace the unenfranchised townsmen united in secret frith-gilds of their own, and mobs rose from time to time to sack the houses of foreigners and the wealthier burgesses. Nor did London stand alone in this movement. In all the larger towns the same discontent prevailed, the same social growth called for new institutions, and in their silent revolt against the oppression of the Merchant-gild the Craft-gilds were training themselves to stand forward as champions of a wider liberty in the Barons' War.

Without the towns progress was far slower and more fitful. It would seem indeed that the conquest of the Norman bore harder on the rural population than on any other class of Englishmen. Under the later kings of the house of Ælfred the number of absolute slaves and the number of freemen had alike diminished. The pure slave class had never been numerous, and it had been reduced by the efforts of the Church, perhaps by the general convulsion of the Danish wars. But these wars had often driven the ceorl or freeman of the township to "commend" himself to a thegn who pledged him his protection in consideration of payment in a rendering of labour. It is probable that these dependent ceorls are the 'villeins' of the Norman epoch, the most numerous class of the Domesday Survey, men sunk indeed from pure freedom and bound both to soil and lord, but as yet preserving much of their older rights, retaining their land, free as against all men but

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their lord, and still sending representatives to hundred-moot and shire-moot. They stood therefore far above the "landless man," the man who had never possessed even under the old constitution political rights, whom the legislation of the English Kings had forced to attach himself to a lord on pain of outlawry, and who served as household servant or as hired labourer or at the best as rent-paying tenant of land which was not his own. The Norman knight or lawyer however saw little distinction between these classes; and the tendency of legislation under the Angevins was to blend all in a single class of serfs. While the pure 'theow' or absolute slave disappeared therefore the ceorl or villein sank lower in the social scale. But though the rural population was undoubtedly thrown more together and fused into a more homogeneous class, its actual position corresponded very imperfectly with the view of the lawyers. All indeed were dependents on a lord. The manor-house became the centre of every English village. The manor-court was held in its hall; it was here that the lord or his steward received homage, recovered fines, held the view of frank-pledge, or enrolled the villagers in their tithing. Here too, if the lord possessed criminal jurisdiction, was held his justice court, and without its doors stood his gallows. Around it lay the lord's demesne or home-farm, and the cultivation of this rested wholly with the "villeins" of the manor. It was by them that the great barn was filled with sheaves, the sheep shorn, the grain malted, the wood hewn for the manor-hall fire. These services were the labour-rent by which they held their lands, and it was the nature and extent of this labour-rent which parted one class of the population from another. The 'villein,' in the strict sense of the word, was bound only to gather in his lord's harvest and to aid in the ploughing and sowing of autumn and Lent. The cottar, the bordar, and the labourer were bound to help in the work of the home-farm throughout the year.

But these services and the time of rendering them were

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strictly limited by custom, not only in the case of the ceorl or villein but in that of the originally meaner "landless man." The possession of his little homestead with the ground around it, the privilege of turning out his cattle on the waste of the manor, passed quietly and insensibly from mere indulgences that could be granted or withdrawn at a lord's caprice into rights that could be pleaded at law. The number of teams, the fines, the reliefs, the services that a lord could claim, at first mere matter of oral tradition, came to be entered on the court-roll of the manor, a copy of which became the title-deed of the villein. It was to this that he owed the name of "copy-holder" which at a later time superseded his older title. Disputes were settled by a reference to this roll or on oral evidence of the custom at issue, but a social arrangement which was eminently characteristic of the English spirit of compromise generally secured a fair adjustment of the claims of villein and lord. It was the duty of the lord's bailiff to exact their due services from the villeins, but his coadjutor in this office, the reeve or foreman of the manor, was chosen by the tenants themselves and acted as representative of their interests and rights. A fresh step towards freedom was made by the growing tendency to commute labour-services for money-payments. The population was slowly increasing, and as the law of gavel-kind which was applicable to all landed estates not held by military tenure divided the inheritance of the tenantry equally among their sons the holding of each tenant and the services due from it became divided in a corresponding degree. A labour-rent thus became more difficult to enforce, while the increase of wealth among the tenantry and the rise of a new spirit of independence made it more burthensome to those who rendered it. It was probably from this cause that the commutation of the arrears of labour for a money payment, which had long prevailed on every estate, gradually developed into a general commutation of services. We have already witnessed the silent progress of this

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remarkable change in the case of St. Edmundsbury, but the practice soon became universal, and "malt-silver," "wood-silver," and "larder-silver" gradually took the place of the older personal services on the court-rolls. The process of commutation was hastened by the necessities of the lords themselves. The luxury of the castle-hall, the splendour and pomp of chivalry, the cost of campaigns drained the purses of knight and baron, and the sale of freedom to a serf or exemption from services to a villein afforded an easy and tempting mode of refilling them. In this process even Kings took part. At a later time, under Edward the Third, commissioners were sent to royal estates for the especial purpose of selling manumissions to the King's serfs; and we still possess the names of those who were enfranchised with their families by a payment of hard cash in aid of the exhausted exchequer.

England.

Such was the people which had been growing into a national unity and a national vigour while English king and English baronage battled for rule. But king and baronage themselves had changed like townsman and ceorl. The loss of Normandy, entailing as it did the loss of their Norman lands, was the last of many influences which had been giving through a century and a half a national temper to the baronage. Not only the "new men," the ministers out of whom the two Henrys had raised a nobility, were bound to the Crown, but the older feudal houses now owned themselves as Englishmen and set aside their aims after personal independence for a love of the general freedom of the land. They stood out as the natural leaders of a people bound together by the stern government which had crushed all local division, which had accustomed men to the enjoyment of a peace and justice that imperfect as it seems to modern eyes was almost unexampled elsewhere in Europe, and which had trained them to something of their old free government again by the very machinery of election it used to facilitate its heavy taxation. On the other hand the loss of

Normandy brought home the King. The growth which had been going on had easily escaped the eyes of rulers who were commonly absent from the realm and busy with the affairs of countries beyond the sea. Henry the Second had been absent for years from England: Richard had only visited it twice for a few months: John had as yet been almost wholly occupied with his foreign dominions. To him as to his brother England had as yet been nothing but a land whose gold paid the mercenaries that followed him, and whose people bowed obediently to his will. It was easy to see that between such a ruler and such a nation once brought together strife must come: but that the strife came as it did and ended as it did was due above all to the character of the King.

"Foul as it is, hell itself is defiled by the fouler presence of John." The terrible verdict of his contemporaries has passed into the sober judgement of history. Externally John possessed all the quickness, the vivacity, the cleverness, the good-humour, the social charm which distinguished his house. His worst enemies owned that he toiled steadily and closely at the work of administration. He was fond of learned men like Gerald of Wales. He had a strange gift of attracting friends and of winning the love of women. But in his inner soul John was the worst outcome of the Angevins. He united into one mass of wickedness their insolence, their selfishness, their unbridled lust, their cruelty and tyranny, their shamelessness, their superstition, their cynical indifference to honour or truth. In mere boyhood he tore with brutal levity the beards of the Irish chieftains who came to own him as their lord. His ingratitude and perfidy brought his father with sorrow to the grave. To his brother he was the worst of traitors. All Christendom believed him to be the murderer of his nephew, Arthur of Brittany. He abandoned one wife and was faithless to another. His punishments were refinements of cruelty, the starvation of children, the

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CHAP. I. crushing old men under copes of lead. His court was a brothel where no woman was safe from the royal lust, and where his cynicism loved to publish the news of his victims' shame. He was as craven in his superstition as he was daring in his impiety. Though he scoffed at priests and turned his back on the mass even amidst the solemnities of his coronation he never stirred on a journey without hanging relics round his neck. But with the wickedness of his race he inherited its profound ability. His plan for the relief of Château Gaillard, the rapid march by which he shattered Arthur's hopes at Mirabel, showed an inborn genius for war. In the rapidity and breadth of his political combinations he far surpassed the statesmen of his time. Throughout his reign we see him quick to discern the difficulties of his position, and inexhaustible in the resources with which he met them. The overthrow of his continental power only spurred him to the formation of a league which all but brought Philip to the ground; and the sudden revolt of England was parried by a shameless alliance with the Papacy. The closer study of John's history clears away the charges of sloth and incapacity with which men tried to explain the greatness of his fall. The awful lesson of his life rests on the fact that the king who lost Normandy, became the vassal of the Pope, and perished in a struggle of despair against English freedom was no weak and indolent voluptuary but the ablest and most ruthless of the Angevins.

Innocent the Third. From the moment of his return to England in 1204 John's whole energies were bent to the recovery of his dominions on the Continent. He impatiently collected money and men for the support of those adherents of the House of Anjou who were still struggling against the arms of France in Poitou and Guienne, and in the summer of 1205 he gathered an army at Portsmouth and prepared to cross the Channel. But his project was suddenly thwarted by the resolute opposition of the Primate, Hubert Walter,

and the Earl of Pembroke, William Marshal. So completely had both the baronage and the Church been humbled by his father that the attitude of their representatives revealed to the King a new spirit of national freedom which was rising around him, and John at once braced himself to a struggle with it. The death of Hubert Walter in July, only a few days after his protest, removed his most formidable opponent, and the King resolved to neutralize the opposition of the Church by placing a creature of his own at its head. John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, was elected by the monks of Canterbury at his bidding, and enthroned as Primate. But in a previous though informal gathering the convent had already chosen its sub-prior, Reginald, as Archbishop. The rival claimants hastened to appeal to Rome, and their appeal reached the Papal Court before Christmas. The result of the contest was a startling one both for themselves and for the King. After a year's careful examination Innocent the Third, who now occupied the Papal throne, quashed at the close of 1206 both the contested elections. The decision was probably a just one, but Innocent was far from stopping there. The monks who appeared before him brought powers from the convent to choose a new Primate should their earlier nomination be set aside; and John, secretly assured of their choice of Grey, had promised to confirm their election. But the bribes which the King lavished at Rome failed to win the Pope over to this plan; and whether from mere love of power, for he was pushing the Papal claims of supremacy over Christendom further than any of his predecessors, or as may fairly be supposed in despair of a free election within English bounds, Innocent commanded the monks to elect in his presence Stephen Langton to the archiepiscopal see.

Personally a better choice could not have been made, for Stephen was a man who by sheer weight of learning and holiness of life had risen to the dignity of

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The Interdict.

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Cardinal and whose after career placed him in the front rank of English patriots. But in itself the step was an usurpation of the rights both of the Church and of the Crown. The King at once met it with resistance. When Innocent consecrated the new Primate in June, 1207, and threatened the realm with interdict if Langton were any longer excluded from his see, John replied by a counter threat that the interdict should be followed by the banishment of the clergy and the mutilation of every Italian he could seize in the realm. How little he feared the priesthood he showed when the clergy refused his demand of a thirteenth of movables for the whole country and Archbishop Geoffry of York resisted the tax before the Council. John banished the Archbishop and extorted the money. Innocent however was not a man to draw back from his purpose, and in March 1208 the interdict he had threatened fell upon the land. All worship save that of a few privileged orders, all administration of Sacraments save that of private baptism, ceased over the length and breadth of the country: the church-bells were silent, the dead lay unburied on the ground. Many of the bishops fled from the country. The Church in fact, so long the main support of the royal power against the baronage, was now driven into opposition. Its change of attitude was to be of vast moment in the struggle which was impending; but John recked little of the future; he replied to the interdict by confiscating the lands of the clergy who observed it, by subjecting them in spite of their privileges to the royal courts, and by leaving outrages on them unpunished. "Let him go," said John, when a Welshman was brought before him for the murder of a priest, "he has killed my enemy." In 1209 the Pope proceeded to the further sentence of excommunication, and the King was formally cut off from the pale of the Church. But the new sentence was met with the same defiance as the old. Five of the bishops fled over sea, and secret disaffection was spreading widely, but there was no public avoidance of

the excommunicated King. An Archdeacon of Norwich who withdrew from his service was crushed to death under a cope of lead, and the hint was sufficient to prevent either prelate or noble from following his example.

The attitude of John showed the power which the administrative reforms of his father had given to the Crown. He stood alone, with nobles estranged from him and the Church against him, but his strength seemed utterly unbroken. From the first moment of his rule John had defied the baronage. The promise to satisfy their demand for redress of wrongs in the past reign, a promise made at his election, remained unfulfilled; when the demand was repeated he answered it by seizing their castles and taking their children as hostages for their loyalty. The cost of his fruitless threats of war had been met by heavy and repeated taxation, by increased land tax and increased scutage. The quarrel with the Church and fear of their revolt only deepened his oppression of the nobles. He drove De Braose, one of the most powerful of the Lords Marchers, to die in exile, while his wife and grandchildren were believed to have been starved to death in the royal prisons. On the nobles who still clung panic-stricken to the court of the excommunicate king John heaped outrages worse than death. Illegal exactions, the seizure of their castles, the preference shown to foreigners, were small provocations compared with his attacks on the honour of their wives and daughters. But the baronage still submitted. The financial exactions indeed became light as John filled his treasury with the goods of the Church; the King's vigour was seen in the rapidity with which he crushed a rising of the nobles in Ireland and foiled an outbreak of the Welsh; while the triumphs of his father had taught the baronage its weakness in any single-handed struggle against the Crown. Hated therefore as he was the land remained still. Only one weapon was now left in Innocent's hands. Men held then that a King, once excommunicate, ceased to be a Christian

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or to have claims on the obedience of Christian subjects. As spiritual heads of Christendom, the Popes had ere now asserted their right to remove such a ruler from his throne and to give it to a worthier than he; and it was this right which Innocent at last felt himself driven to exercise. After useless threats he issued in 1212 a bull of deposition against John, absolved his subjects from their allegiance, proclaimed a crusade against him as an enemy to Christianity and the Church, and committed the execution of the sentence to the King of the French. John met the announcement of this step with the same scorn as before. His insolent disdain suffered the Roman legate, Cardinal Pandulf, to proclaim his deposition to his face at Northampton. When Philip collected an army for an attack on England an enormous host gathered at the King's call on Barham Down; and the English fleet dispelled all danger of invasion by crossing the Channel, by capturing a number of French ships, and by burning Dieppe.

*John's
 Submission.*

But it was not in England only that the King showed his strength and activity. Vile as he was, John possessed in a high degree the political ability of his race, and in the diplomatic efforts with which he met the danger from France he showed himself his father's equal. The barons of Poitou were roused to attack Philip from the south. John bought the aid of the Count of Flanders on his northern border. The German King, Otto, pledged himself to bring the knighthood of Germany to support an invasion of France. But at the moment of his success in diplomacy John suddenly gave way. It was in fact the revelation of a danger at home which shook him from his attitude of contemptuous defiance. The bull of deposition gave fresh energy to every enemy. The Scotch King was in correspondence with Innocent. The Welsh princes who had just been forced to submission broke out again in war. John hanged their hostages, and called his host to muster for a fresh inroad into Wales, but the army met only to become a fresh source of danger.

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Powerless to oppose the King openly, the baronage had plunged almost to a man into secret conspiracies. The hostility of Philip had dispelled their dread of isolated action; many indeed had even promised aid to the French King on his landing. John found himself in the midst of hidden enemies; and nothing could have saved him but the haste—whether of panic or quick decision—with which he disbanded his army and took refuge in Nottingham Castle. The arrest of some of the barons showed how true were his fears, for the heads of the French conspiracy, Robert Fitzwalter and Eustace de Vesci, at once fled over sea to Philip. His daring self-confidence, the skill of his diplomacy, could no longer hide from John the utter loneliness of his position. At war with Rome, with France, with Scotland, Ireland and Wales, at war with the Church, he saw himself disarmed by this sudden revelation of treason in the one force left at his disposal. With characteristic suddenness he gave way. He endeavoured by remission of fines to win back his people. He negotiated eagerly with the Pope, consented to receive the Archbishop, and promised to repay the money he had extorted from the Church.

But the shameless ingenuity of the King's temper was seen in his resolve to find in his very humiliation a new source of strength. If he yielded to the Church he had no mind to yield to the rest of his foes; it was indeed in the Pope who had defeated him that he saw the means of baffling their efforts. It was Rome that formed the link between the varied elements of hostility which combined against him. It was Rome that gave its sanction to Philip's ambition and roused the hopes of Scotch and Welsh, Rome that called the clergy to independence and nerved the barons to resistance. To detach Innocent by submission from the league which hemmed him in on every side was the least part of John's purpose. He resolved to make Rome his ally, to turn its spiritual thunders on his foes, to use it in breaking up the confederacy it

*John
 becomes
 vassal of
 Rome.*

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had formed, in crushing the baronage, in oppressing the clergy, in paralyzing—as Rome only could paralyze—the energy of the Primate. That greater issues even than these were involved in John's rapid change of policy time was to show, but there is no need to credit the King with the foresight that would have discerned them. His quick versatile temper saw no doubt little save the momentary gain. But that gain was immense. Nor was the price as hard to pay as it seems to modern eyes. The Pope stood too high above earthly monarchs, his claims, at least as Innocent conceived and expressed them, were too spiritual, too remote from the immediate business and interests of the day, to make the owning of his suzerainty any very practical burthen. John could recall a time when his father was willing to own the same subjection as that which he was about to take on himself. He could recall the parallel allegiance which his brother had pledged to the Emperor. Shame indeed there must be in any loss of independence, but in this less than any, and with Rome the shame of submission had already been incurred. But whatever were the King's thoughts his act was decisive. On the 15th of May 1213 he knelt before the legate Pandulf, surrendered his kingdom to the Roman See, took it back again as a tributary vassal, swore fealty and did liege homage to the Pope.

*Its
Results.*

In after times men believed that England thrilled at the news with a sense of national shame such as she had never felt before. "He has become the Pope's man" the whole country was said to have murmured; "he has forfeited the very name of King; from a free man he has degraded himself into a serf." But this was the belief of a time still to come when the rapid growth of national feeling which this step and its issues did more than anything to foster made men look back on the scene between John and Pandulf as a national dishonour. We see little trace of such a feeling in the contemporary accounts of the time. All seem rather to have

regarded it as a complete settlement of the difficulties in which king and kingdom were involved. As a political measure its success was immediate and complete. The French army at once broke up in impotent rage, and when Philip turned on the enemy John had raised up for him in Flanders, five hundred English ships under the Earl of Salisbury fell upon the fleet which accompanied the French army along the coast and utterly destroyed it. The league which John had so long matured at once disclosed itself. Otto, reinforcing his German army by the knight-hood of Flanders and Boulogne as well as by a body of mercenaries in the pay of the English King, invaded France from the north. John called on his baronage to follow him over sea for an attack on Philip from the South.

Their plea that he remained excommunicate was set aside by the arrival of Langton and his formal absolution of the King on a renewal of his coronation oath and a pledge to put away all evil customs. But the barons still stood aloof. They would serve at home, they said, but they refused to cross the sea. Those of the north took a more decided attitude of opposition. From this point indeed the northern barons begin to play their part in our constitutional history. Lacies, Vescies, Percies, Stutevilles, Bruces, houses such as those of de Ros or de Vaux, all had sprung to greatness on the ruins of the Mowbrays and the great houses of the Conquest and had done service to the Crown in its strife with the older feudatories. But loyal as was their tradition they were English to the core; they had neither lands nor interest over sea, and they now declared themselves bound by no tenure to follow the King in foreign wars. Furious at this check to his plans John marched in arms northwards to bring these barons to submission. But he had now to reckon with a new antagonist in the Justiciar, Geoffrey Fitz-Peter. Geoffrey had hitherto bent to the King's will; but the political sagacity which he drew from the school of Henry the Second in which he had been trained showed

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*Geoffrey
Fitz-Peter.*

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him the need of concession, and his wealth, his wide kinship, and his experience of affairs gave his interposition a decisive weight. He seized on the political opportunity which was offered by the gathering of a Council at St. Albans at the opening of August with the purpose of assessing the damages done to the Church. Besides the bishops and barons, a reeve and his four men were summoned to this Council from each royal demesne, no doubt simply as witnesses of the sums due to the plundered clergy. Their presence however was of great import. It is the first instance which our history presents of the summons of such representatives to a national Council, and the instance took fresh weight from the great matters which came to be discussed. In the King's name the Justiciar promised good government for the time to come, and forbade all royal officers to practise extortion as they prized life and limb. The King's peace was pledged to those who had opposed him in the past; and observance of the laws of Henry the First was enjoined upon all within the realm.

Stephen
Langton.

But it was not in Geoffrey Fitz-Peter that English freedom was to find its champion and the baronage their leader. From the moment of his landing in England Stephen Langton had taken up the constitutional position of the Primate in upholding the old customs and rights of the realm against the personal despotism of the kings. As Anselm had withstood William the Red, as Theobald had withstood Stephen, so Langton prepared to withstand and rescue his country from the tyranny of John. He had already forced him to swear to observe the laws of Edward the Confessor, in other words the traditional liberties of the realm. When the baronage refused to sail for Poitou he compelled the King to deal with them not by arms but by process of law. But the work which he now undertook was far greater and weightier than this. The pledges of Henry the First had long been forgotten when the Justiciar brought them to light, but Langton saw

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the vast importance of such a precedent. At the close of the month he produced Henry's charter in a fresh gathering of barons at St. Paul's, and it was at once welcomed as a base for the needed reforms. From London Langton hastened to the King, whom he reached at Northampton on his way to attack the nobles of the north, and wrested from him a promise to bring his strife with them to legal judgement before assailing them in arms. With his allies gathering abroad John had doubtless no wish to be entangled in a long quarrel at home, and the Archbishop's mediation allowed him to withdraw with seeming dignity. After a demonstration therefore at Durham John marched hastily south again, and reached London in October. His Justiciar at once laid before him the claims of the Councils of St. Alban's and St. Paul's; but the death of Geoffrey at this juncture freed him from the pressure which his minister was putting upon him. "Now, by God's feet," cried John, "I am for the first time King and Lord of England," and he entrusted the vacant justiciarship to a Poitevin, Peter des Roches, the Bishop of Winchester, whose temper was in harmony with his own. But the death of Geoffrey only called the Archbishop to the front, and Langton at once demanded the King's assent to the Charter of Henry the First. In seizing on this Charter as a basis for national action Langton showed a political ability of the highest order. The enthusiasm with which its recital was welcomed showed the sagacity with which the Archbishop had chosen his ground. From that moment the baronage was no longer drawn together in secret conspiracies by a sense of common wrong or a vague longing for common deliverance: they were openly united in a definite claim of national freedom and national law.

John could as yet only meet the claim by delay. His policy had still to wait for its fruits at Rome, his diplomacy to reap its harvest in Flanders, ere he could deal with England. From the hour of his submission to the Papacy

Bouvines.

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his one thought had been that of vengeance on the barons who, as he held, had betrayed him; but vengeance was impossible till he should return a conqueror from the fields of France. It was a sense of this danger which nerved the baronage to their obstinate refusal to follow him over sea: but furious as he was at their resistance, the Archbishop's interposition condemned John still to wait for the hour of his revenge. In the spring of 1214 he crossed with what forces he could gather to Poitou, rallied its nobles round him, passed the Loire in triumph, and won back again Angers, the home of his race. At the same time Otto and the Count of Flanders, their German and Flemish knighthood strengthened by reinforcements from Boulogne as well as by a body of English troops under the Earl of Salisbury, threatened France from the north. For the moment Philip seemed lost: and yet on the fortunes of Philip hung the fortunes of English freedom. But in this crisis of her fate, France was true to herself and her King. From every borough of Northern France the townsmen marched to his rescue, and the village priests led their flocks to battle with the Church-banners flying at their head. The two armies met at the close of July near the bridge of Bouvines, between Lille and Tournay, and from the first the day went against the allies. The Flemish knights were the first to fly; then the Germans in the centre of the host were crushed by the overwhelming numbers of the French; last of all the English on the right of it were broken by a fierce onset of the Bishop of Beauvais who charged mace in hand and struck the Earl of Salisbury to the ground. The news of this complete overthrow reached John in the midst of his triumphs in the South, and scattered his hopes to the winds. He was at once deserted by the Poitevin nobles; and a hasty retreat alone enabled him to return in October, baffled and humiliated, to his island kingdom.

*Rising of
the
Baronage.*

His return forced on the crisis to which events had so long been drifting. The victory at Bouvines gave strength

to his opponents. The open resistance of the northern Barons nerved the rest of their order to action. The great houses who had cast away their older feudal traditions for a more national policy were drawn by the crisis into close union with the families which had sprung from the ministers and councillors of the two Henries. To the first group belonged such men as Saher de Quinci, the Earl of Winchester, Geoffrey of Mandeville, Earl of Essex, the Earl of Clare, Fulk Fitz-Warin, William Mallet, the houses of Fitz-Alan and Gant. Among the second group were Henry Bohun and Roger Bigod, the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk, the younger William Marshal, and Robert de Vere. Robert Fitz-Walter, who took the command of their united force, represented both parties equally, for he was sprung from the Norman house of Brionne, while the Justiciar of Henry the Second, Richard de Lucy, had been his grandfather. Secretly, and on the pretext of pilgrimage, these nobles met at St. Edmundsbury, resolute to bear no longer with John's delays. If he refused to restore their liberties they swore to make war on him till he confirmed them by Charter under the King's seal, and they parted to raise forces with the purpose of presenting their demands at Christmas. John, knowing nothing of the coming storm, pursued his policy of winning over the Church by granting it freedom of election, while he embittered still more the strife with his nobles by demanding scutage from the northern nobles who had refused to follow him to Poitou. But the barons were now ready to act, and early in January in the memorable year 1215 they appeared in arms to lay, as they had planned, their demands before the King.

John was taken by surprise. He asked for a truce till Easter-tide, and spent the interval in fevered efforts to avoid the blow. Again he offered freedom to the Church, and took vows as a Crusader against whom war was a sacrilege, while he called for a general oath of allegiance and fealty from the whole body of his subjects.

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*John
deserted.*

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But month after month only showed the King the uselessness of further resistance. Though Pandulf was with him, his vassalage had as yet brought little fruit in the way of aid from Rome; the commissioners whom he sent to plead his cause at the shire-courts brought back news that no man would help him against the charter that the barons claimed: and his efforts to detach the clergy from the league of his opponents utterly failed. The nation was against the King. He was far indeed from being utterly deserted. His ministers still clung to him, men such as Geoffrey de Lucy, Geoffrey de Furnival, Thomas Basset, and William Briwere, statesmen trained in the administrative school of his father and who, dissent as they might from John's mere oppression, still looked on the power of the Crown as the one barrier against feudal anarchy: and beside them stood some of the great nobles of royal blood, his father's bastard Earl William of Salisbury, his cousin Earl William of Warenne, and Henry Earl of Cornwall, a grandson of Henry the First. With him too remained Ranulf, Earl of Chester, and the wisest and noblest of the barons, William Marshal the elder, Earl of Pembroke. William Marshal had shared in the rising of the younger Henry against Henry the Second, and stood by him as he died; he had shared in the overthrow of William Longchamp and in the outlawry of John. He was now an old man, firm, as we shall see in his after-course, to recall the government to the path of freedom and law, but shrinking from a strife which might bring back the anarchy of Stephen's day, and looking for reforms rather in the bringing constitutional pressure to bear upon the King than in forcing them from him by arms.

John
yields.

But cling as such men might to John, they clung to him rather as mediators than adherents. Their sympathies went with the demands of the barons when the delay which had been granted was over and the nobles again gathered in arms at Brackley in Northamptonshire to lay their claims before the King.

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Nothing marks more strongly the absolutely despotic idea of his sovereignty which John had formed than the passionate surprise which breaks out in his reply. "Why do they not ask for my kingdom?" he cried. "I will never grant such liberties as will make me a slave!" The imperialist theories of the lawyers of his father's court had done their work. Held at bay by the practical sense of Henry, they had told on the more head-strong nature of his sons. Richard and John both held with Glanvill that the will of the prince was the law of the land; and to fetter that will by the customs and franchises which were embodied in the barons' claims seemed to John a monstrous usurpation of his rights. But no imperialist theories had touched the minds of his people. The country rose as one man at his refusal. At the close of May London threw open her gates to the forces of the barons, now arrayed under Robert Fitz-Walter as "Marshal of the Army of God and Holy Church." Exeter and Lincoln followed the example of the capital; promises of aid came from Scotland and Wales; the northern barons marched hastily under Eustace de Vesci to join their comrades in London. Even the nobles who had as yet clung to the King, but whose hopes of conciliation were blasted by his obstinacy, yielded at last to the summons of the "Army of God." Pandulf indeed and Archbishop Langton still remained with John, but they counselled as Earl Ranulf and William Marshal counselled his acceptance of the Charter. None in fact counselled its rejection save his new Justiciar, the Poitevin Peter des Roches, and other foreigners who knew the barons purposed driving them from the land. But even the number of these was small; there was a moment when John found himself with but seven knights at his back and before him a nation in arms. Quick as he was, he had been taken utterly by surprise. It was in vain that in the short respite he had gained from Christmas to Easter he had summoned mercenaries to his aid and

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appealed to his new suzerain, the Pope. Summons and appeal were alike too late. Nursing wrath in his heart, John bowed to necessity and called the barons to a conference on an island in the Thames, between Windsor and Staines, near a marshy meadow by the river side, the meadow of Runnymede. The King encamped on one bank of the river, the barons covered the flat of Runnymede on the other. Their delegates met on the 15th of June in the island between them, but the negotiations were a mere cloak to cover John's purpose of unconditional submission. The Great Charter was discussed and agreed to in a single day.

*The Great
 Charter.*

Copies of it were made and sent for preservation to the cathedrals and churches, and one copy may still be seen in the British Museum, injured by age and fire, but with the royal seal still hanging from the brown, shrivelled parchment. It is impossible to gaze without reverence on the earliest monument of English freedom which we can see with our own eyes and touch with our own hands, the great Charter to which from age to age men have looked back as the groundwork of English liberty. But in itself the Charter was no novelty, nor did it claim to establish any new constitutional principles. The Charter of Henry the First formed the basis of the whole, and the additions to it are for the most part formal recognitions of the judicial and administrative changes introduced by Henry the Second. What was new in it was its origin. In form, like the Charter on which it was based, it was nothing but a royal grant. In actual fact it was a treaty between the whole English people and its king. In it England found itself for the first time since the Conquest a nation bound together by common national interests, by a common national sympathy. In words which almost close the Charter, the "community of the whole land" is recognized as the great body from which the restraining power of the baronage takes its validity. There is no distinction of blood or class, of Norman or not

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Norman, of noble or not noble. All are recognized as Englishmen, the rights of all are owned as English rights. Bishops and nobles claimed and secured at Runnymede the rights not of baron and churchman only but those of freeholder and merchant, of townsman and villein. The provisions against wrong and extortion which the barons drew up as against the King for themselves they drew up as against themselves for their tenants. Based too as it professed to be on Henry's Charter it was far from being a mere copy of what had gone before. The vague expressions of the old Charter were now exchanged for precise and elaborate provisions. The bonds of unwritten custom which the older grant did little more than recognize had proved too weak to hold the Angevins; and the baronage set them aside for the restraints of written and defined law. It is in this way that the Great Charter marks the transition from the age of traditional rights, preserved in the nation's memory and officially declared by the Primate, to the age of written legislation, of Parliaments and Statutes, which was to come.

Its opening indeed is in general terms. The Church had shown its power of self-defence in the struggle over the interdict, and the clause which recognized its rights alone retained the older and general form. But all vagueness ceases when the Charter passes on to deal with the rights of Englishmen at large, their right to justice, to security of person and property, to good government. "No freeman," ran a memorable article that lies at the base of our whole judicial system, "shall be seized or imprisoned, or dispossessed, or outlawed, or in any way brought to ruin: we will not go against any man nor send against him, save by legal judgement of his peers or by the law of the land." "To no man will we sell," runs another, "or deny, or delay, right or justice." The great reforms of the past reigns were now formally recognized; judges of assize were to hold their circuits four times in the year, and the King's Court was no longer to follow the King in his

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wanderings over the realm but to sit in a fixed place. But the denial of justice under John was a small danger compared with the lawless exactions both of himself and his predecessor. Richard had increased the amount of the scutage which Henry the Second had introduced, and applied it to raise funds for his ransom. He had restored the Danegeld, or land-tax, so often abolished, under the new name of "carucage," had seized the wool of the Cistercians and the plate of the churches, and rated movables as well as land. John had again raised the rate of scutage, and imposed aids, fines, and ransoms at his pleasure without counsel of the baronage. The Great Charter met this abuse by a provision on which our constitutional system rests. "No scutage or aid [other than the three customary feudal aids] shall be imposed in our realm save by the common council of the realm;" and to this Great Council it was provided that prelates and the greater barons should be summoned by special writ and all tenants in chief through the sheriffs and bailiffs at least forty days before. The provision defined what had probably been the common usage of the realm; but the definition turned it into a national right, a right so momentous that on it rests our whole Parliamentary life. Even the baronage seem to have been startled when they realized the extent of their claim; and the provision was dropped from the later issue of the Charter at the outset of the next reign. But the clause brought home to the nation at large their possession of a right which became dearer as years went by. More and more clearly the nation discovered that in these simple words lay the secret of political power. It was the right of self-taxation that England fought for under Earl Simon as she fought for it under Hampden. It was the establishment of this right which established English freedom.

The rights which the barons claimed for themselves they claimed for the nation at large. The boon of free and unbought justice was a boon for all, but a special

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provision protected the poor. The forfeiture of the freeman on conviction of felony was never to include his tenement, or that of the merchant his wares, or that of the countryman, as Henry the Second had long since ordered, his wain. The means of actual livelihood were to be left even to the worst. The seizure of provisions, the exaction of forced labour, by royal officers was forbidden; and the abuses of the forest system were checked by a clause which disafforested all forests made in John's reign. The under-tenants were protected against all lawless exactions of their lords in precisely the same terms as these were protected against the lawless exactions of the Crown. The towns were secured in the enjoyment of their municipal privileges, their freedom from arbitrary taxation, their rights of justice, of common deliberation, of regulation of trade. "Let the city of London have all its old liberties and its free customs, as well by land as by water. Besides this, we will and grant that all other cities, and boroughs, and towns, and ports, have all their liberties and free customs." The influence of the trading class is seen in two other enactments by which freedom of journeying and trade was secured to foreign merchants and an uniformity of weights and measures was ordered to be enforced throughout the realm.

There remained only one question, and that the most difficult of all; the question how to secure this order which the Charter established in the actual government of the realm. It was easy to sweep away the immediate abuses; the hostages were restored to their homes, the foreigners banished by a clause in the Charter from the country. But it was less easy to provide means for the control of a King whom no man could trust. By the treaty as settled at Runnymede a council of twenty-four barons were to be chosen from the general body of their order to enforce on John the observance of the Charter with the right of declaring war on the King should its provisions be infringed, and it was provided that the Charter

*Innocent
annuls the
Charter.*

CHAP. I. should not only be published throughout the whole country
John. but sworn to at every hundred-mote and town-mote by
1214- order from the King. "They have given me four-
1216. and-twenty over-kings," cried John in a burst of fury, flinging himself on the floor and gnawing sticks and straw in his impotent rage. But the rage soon passed into the subtle policy of which he was a master. After a few days he left Windsor; and lingered for months along the southern shore, waiting for news of the aid he had solicited from Rome and from the Continent. It was not without definite purpose that he had become the vassal of the Papacy. While Innocent was dreaming of a vast Christian Empire with the Pope at its head to enforce justice and religion on his under-kings, John believed that the Papal protection would enable him to rule as tyrannically as he would. The thunders of the Papacy were to be ever at hand for his protection, as the armies of England are at hand to protect the vileness and oppression of a Turkish Sultan or a Nizam of Hyderabad. His envoys were already at Rome, pleading for a condemnation of the Charter. The after action of the Papacy shows that Innocent was moved by no hostility to English freedom. But he was indignant that a matter which might have been brought before his court of appeal as overlord should have been dealt with by armed revolt, and in this crisis both his imperious pride and the legal tendency of his mind swayed him to the side of the King who submitted to his justice. He annulled the Great Charter by a bull in August, and at the close of the year excommunicated the barons.

*Landing
of Lewis.*

His suspension of Stephen Langton from the exercise of his office as Primate was a more fatal blow. Langton hurried to Rome, and his absence left the barons without a head at a moment when the very success of their efforts was dividing them. Their forces were already disorganized when autumn brought a host of foreign soldiers from over sea to the King's standard. After

starving Rochester into submission John found himself strong enough to march ravaging through the Midland and Northern counties, while his mercenaries spread like locusts over the whole face of the land. From Berwick the King turned back triumphant to coop up his enemies in London while fresh Papal excommunications fell on the barons and the city. But the burghers set Innocent at defiance. "The ordering of secular matters appertaineth not to the Pope," they said, in words that seem like mutterings of the coming Lollardism; and at the advice of Simon Langton, the Archbishop's brother, bells swung out and mass was celebrated as before. Success however was impossible for the undisciplined militia of the country and the towns against the trained forces of the King, and despair drove the barons to listen to Fitz-Walter and the French party in their ranks, and to seek aid from over sea. Philip had long been waiting the opportunity for his revenge upon John. In the April of 1216 his son Lewis accepted the crown in spite of Innocent's excommunications, and landed soon after in Kent with a considerable force. As the barons had foreseen, the French mercenaries who constituted John's host refused to fight against the French sovereign and the whole aspect of affairs was suddenly reversed. Deserted by the bulk of his troops, the King was forced to fall rapidly back on the Welsh Marches, while his rival entered London and received the submission of the larger part of England. Only Dover held out obstinately against Lewis. By a series of rapid marches John succeeded in distracting the plans of the barons and in relieving Lincoln; then after a short stay at Lynn he crossed the Wash in a fresh movement to the north. In crossing however his army was surprized by the tide, and his baggage with the royal treasures washed away. Fever seized the baffled tyrant as he reached the Abbey of Swineshead, his sickness was inflamed by a gluttonous debauch, and on the 19th of October John breathed his last at Newark.

CHAP. I.
John.
1214-
1216.

CHAPTER II.

HENRY THE THIRD.

1216—1232.

William Marshal. THE death of John changed the whole face of English affairs. His son, Henry of Winchester, was but nine years old, and the pity which was stirred by the child's helplessness was aided by a sense of injustice in burthening him with the iniquity of his father. At his death John had driven from his side even the most loyal of his barons; but William Marshal had clung to him to the last, and with him was Gualo, the Legate of Innocent's successor, Honorius the Third. The position of Gualo as representative of the Papal over-lord of the realm was of the highest importance, and his action showed the real attitude of Rome towards English freedom. The boy-king was hardly crowned at Gloucester when Legate and Earl issued in his name the very Charter against which his father had died fighting. Only the clauses which regulated taxation and the summoning of parliament were as yet declared to be suspended. The choice of William Marshal as "governor of King and kingdom" gave weight to this step; and its effect was seen when the contest was renewed in 1217. Lewis was at first successful in the eastern counties, but the political reaction was aided by jealousies which broke out between the English and French nobles in his force, and the first drew gradually away from him. So general was the defection that at the opening of summer William Marshal felt himself strong enough for a blow at his foes

Lewis himself was investing Dover and a joint army of French and English barons under the Count of Perche and Robert Fitz-Walter was besieging Lincoln when gathering troops rapidly from the royal castles the regent marched to the relief of the latter town. Cooped up in its narrow streets and attacked at once by the Earl and the garrison, the barons fled in utter rout; the Count of Perche fell on the field, Robert Fitz-Walter was taken prisoner. Lewis at once retreated on London and called for aid from France. But a more terrible defeat crushed his remaining hopes. A small English fleet which set sail from Dover under Hubert de Burgh fell boldly on the reinforcements which were crossing under escort of Eustace the Monk, a well-known freebooter of the Channel. Some incidents of the fight light up for us the naval warfare of the time. From the decks of the English vessels bowmen poured their arrows into the crowded transports, others hurled quicklime into their enemies' faces, while the more active vessels crashed with their armed prows into the sides of the French ships. The skill of the mariners of the Cinque Ports turned the day against the larger forces of their opponents, and the fleet of Eustace was utterly destroyed. The royal army at once closed upon London, but resistance was really at an end. By a treaty concluded at Lambeth in September Lewis promised to withdraw from England on payment of a sum which he claimed as debt; his adherents were restored to their possessions, the liberties of London and other towns confirmed, and the prisoners on either side set at liberty. A fresh issue of the Charter, though in its modified form, proclaimed yet more clearly the temper and policy of the Earl Marshal.

His death at the opening of 1219, after a year spent in giving order to the realm, brought no change in the system he had adopted. The control of affairs passed into the hands of a new legate, Pandulf, of Stephen Langton who had just returned forgiven from Rome, and of the Justiciar, Hubert de Burgh. It was a time of transition, and the

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Henry the
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Hubert de
Burgh.

CHAP. II. temper of the Justiciar was eminently transitional.
 Henry the Bred in the school of Henry the Second, Hubert had
 Third. little sympathy with national freedom, and though reso-
 1216- lute to maintain the Charter he can have had small love
 1232. for it; his conception of good government, like that of his
 master, lay in a wise personal administration, in the pre-
 servation of order and law. But he combined with this a
 thoroughly English desire for national independence, a hatred
 of foreigners, and a reluctance to waste English blood and
 treasure in Continental struggles. Able as he proved him-
 self, his task was one of no common difficulty. He was
 hampered by the constant interference of Rome. A Papal
 legate resided at the English court, and claimed a share
 in the administration of the realm as the representative of
 its over-lord and as guardian of the young sovereign.
 A foreign party too had still a footing in the kingdom, for
 William Marshal had been unable to rid himself of men
 like Peter des Roches or Faukes de Breauté, who had fought
 on the royal side in the struggle against Lewis. Hubert
 had to deal too with the anarchy which that struggle
 left behind it. From the time of the Conquest the centre
 of England had been covered with the domains of great
 houses, whose longings were for feudal independence and
 whose spirit of revolt had been held in check partly by
 the stern rule of the Kings and partly by the rise of a
 baronage sprung from the Court and settled for the most
 part in the North. The oppression of John united both
 the earlier and these newer houses in the struggle for the
 Charter. But the character of each remained unchanged,
 and the close of the struggle saw the feudal party break
 out in their old lawlessness and defiance of the Crown.

Order For a time the anarchy of Stephen's days seemed to
 restored. revive But the Justiciar was resolute to crush it, and he
 was backed by the strenuous efforts of Stephen Langton. A
 new and solemn coronation of the young King in 1220
 was followed by a demand for the restoration of the royal
 castles which had been seized by the barons and foreigners.

The Earl of Chester, the head of the feudal baronage, though
 he rose in armed rebellion, quailed before the march of
 Hubert and the Primate's threats of excommunication. A
 more formidable foe remained in the Frenchman, Faukes de
 Breauté, the sheriff of six counties, with six royal castles
 in his hands, and allied both with the rebel barons and
 Llewelyn of Wales. But in 1224 his castle of Bedford
 was besieged for two months; and on its surrender the
 stern justice of Hubert hung the twenty-four knights and
 their retainers who formed the garrison before its walls.
 The blow was effectual; the royal castles were surrendered
 by the barons, and the land was once more at peace. Freed
 from foreign soldiery, the country was freed also from the
 presence of the foreign legate. Langton wrested a promise
 from Rome that so long as he lived no future legate should
 be sent to England, and with Pandulf's resignation in 1221
 the direct interference of the Papacy in the government of
 the realm came to an end. But even these services of the
 Primate were small compared with his services to English
 freedom. Throughout his life the Charter was the first
 object of his care. The omission of the articles which
 restricted the royal power over taxation in the Charter
 which was published at Henry's accession in 1216 was
 doubtless due to the Archbishop's absence and disgrace
 at Rome. The suppression of disorder seems to have
 revived the older spirit of resistance among the royal
 ministers; for when Langton demanded a fresh confirmation
 of the Charter in Parliament at London William Brewer,
 one of the King's councillors, protested that it had been
 extorted by force and was without legal validity. "If
 you loved the King, William," the Primate burst out in
 anger, "you would not throw a stumblingblock in the way
 of the peace of the realm." The young King was cowed
 by the Archbishop's wrath, and promised observance of
 the Charter. But it may have been their consciousness of
 such a temper among the royal councillors that made
 Langton and the baronage demand two years later a fresh

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CHAP. II. promulgation of the Charter as the price of a subsidy, and Henry's assent established the principle, so fruitful of constitutional results, that redress of wrongs precedes a grant to the Crown.

Henry the Third.
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State of the Church.

These repeated sanctions of the Charter and the government of the realm year after year in accordance with its provisions were gradually bringing the new freedom home to the mass of Englishmen. But the sense of liberty was at this time quickened and intensified by a religious movement which stirred English society to its depths. Never had the priesthood wielded such boundless power over Christendom as in the days of Innocent the Third and his immediate successors. But its religious hold on the people was loosening day by day. The old reverence for the Papacy was fading away before the universal resentment at its political ambition, its lavish use of interdict and excommunication for purely secular ends, its degradation of the most sacred sentences into means of financial extortion. In Italy the struggle that was opening between Rome and Frederick the Second disclosed a spirit of scepticism which among the Epicurean poets of Florence denied the immortality of the soul and attacked the very foundations of the faith itself. In Southern Gaul, Languedoc and Provence had embraced the heresy of the Albigenses and thrown off all allegiance to the Papacy. Even in England, though there were no signs as yet of religious revolt, and though the political action of Rome had been in the main on the side of freedom, there was a spirit of resistance to its interference with national concerns which broke out in the struggle against John. "The Pope has no part in secular matters," had been the reply of London to the interdict of Honorius. And within the English Church itself there was much to call for reform. Its attitude in the strife for the Charter as well as the after work of the Primate had made it more popular than ever; but its spiritual energy was less than its political. The disuse of preaching, the decline of the monastic

orders into rich landowners, the non-residence and ignorance of the parish-priests, lowered the religious influence of the clergy. The abuses of the time foiled even the energy of such men as Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln. His constitutions forbid the clergy to haunt taverns, to gamble, to share in drinking bouts, to mix in the riot and debauchery of the life of the baronage. But such prohibitions witness to the prevalence of the evils they denounce. Bishops and deans were still withdrawn from their ecclesiastical duties to act as ministers, judges, or ambassadors. Benefices were heaped in hundreds at a time on royal favourites like John Mansel. Abbeys absorbed the tithes of parishes and then served them by half-starved vicars, while exemptions purchased from Rome shielded the scandalous lives of canons and monks from all episcopal discipline. And behind all this was a group of secular statesmen and scholars, the successors of such critics as Walter Map, waging indeed no open warfare with the Church, but noting with bitter sarcasm its abuses and its faults.

To bring the world back again within the pale of the Church was the aim of two religious orders which sprang suddenly to life at the opening of the thirteenth century. The zeal of the Spaniard Dominic was roused at the sight of the lordly prelates who sought by fire and sword to win the Albigensian heretics to the faith. "Zeal," he cried, "must be met by zeal, lowliness by lowliness, false sanctity by real sanctity, preaching lies by preaching truth." His fiery ardour and rigid orthodoxy were seconded by the mystical piety, the imaginative enthusiasm of Francis of Assisi. The life of Francis falls like a stream of tender light across the darkness of the time. In the frescoes of Giotto or the verse of Dante we see him take Poverty for his bride. He strips himself of all, he flings his very clothes at his father's feet, that he may be one with Nature and God. His passionate verse claims the moon for his sister and the sun for his brother, he calls on his brother

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The Friars.

CHAP. II. the Wind, and his sister the Water. His last faint cry was a "Welcome, Sister Death!" Strangely as the two men differed from each other, their aim was the same—to convert the heathen, to extirpate heresy, to reconcile knowledge with orthodoxy, above all to carry the Gospel to the poor. The work was to be done by an utter reversal of the older monasticism, by seeking personal salvation in effort for the salvation of their fellow-men, by exchanging the solitary of the cloister for the preacher, the monk for the "brother" or friar. To force the new "brethren" into entire dependence on those among whom they laboured their vow of Poverty was turned into a stern reality; the "Begging Friars" were to subsist solely on alms, they might possess neither money nor lands, the very houses in which they lived were to be held in trust for them by others. The tide of popular enthusiasm which welcomed their appearance swept before it the reluctance of Rome, the jealousy of the older orders, the opposition of the parochial priesthood. Thousands of brethren gathered in a few years round Francis and Dominic; and the begging preachers, clad in coarse frock of serge with a girdle of rope round their waist, wandered barefooted as missionaries over Asia, battled with heresy in Italy and Gaul, lectured in the Universities, and preached and toiled among the poor.

*The
Friars
and the
Towns.*

To the towns especially the coming of the Friars was a religious revolution. They had been left for the most part to the worst and most ignorant of the clergy, the mass-priest, whose sole subsistence lay in his fees. Burgher and artizan were left to spell out what religious instruction they might from the gorgeous ceremonies of the Church's ritual or the scriptural pictures and sculptures which were graven on the walls of its minsters. We can hardly wonder at the burst of enthusiasm which welcomed the itinerant preacher whose fervid appeal, coarse wit, and familiar story brought religion into the fair and the market place. In England, where the Black Friars of Dominic

arrived in 1221, the Grey Friars of Francis in 1224, both were received with the same delight. As the older orders had chosen the country, the Friars chose the town. They had hardly landed at Dover before they made straight for London and Oxford. In their ignorance of the road the first two Grey Brothers lost their way in the woods between Oxford and Baldon, and fearful of night and of the floods turned aside to a grange of the monks of Abingdon. Their ragged clothes and foreign gestures, as they prayed for hospitality, led the porter to take them for jongleurs, the jesters and jugglers of the day, and the news of this break in the monotony of their lives brought prior, sacrist, and cellarer to the door to welcome them and witness their tricks. The disappointment was too much for the temper of the monks, and the brothers were kicked roughly from the gate to find their night's lodging under a tree. But the welcome of the townsmen made up everywhere for the ill-will and opposition of both clergy and monks. The work of the Friars was physical as well as moral. The rapid progress of population within the boroughs had outstripped the sanitary regulations of the Middle Ages, and fever or plague or the more terrible scourge of leprosy festered in the wretched hovels of the suburbs. It was to haunts such as these that Francis had pointed his disciples, and the Grey Brethren at once fixed themselves in the meanest and poorest quarters of each town. Their first work lay in the noisome lazar-houses; it was amongst the lepers that they commonly chose the site of their homes. At London they settled in the shambles of Newgate; at Oxford they made their way to the swampy ground between its walls and the streams of Thames. Huts of mud and timber, as mean as the huts around them, rose within the rough fence and ditch that bounded the Friary. The order of Francis made a hard fight against the taste for sumptuous buildings and for greater personal comfort which characterized the time. "I did not enter into religion to build walls," protested an English provincial when the brethren

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CHAP. II. pressed for a larger house; and Albert of Pisa ordered a stone cloister which the burgesses of Southampton had built for them to be razed to the ground. "You need no little mountains to lift your heads to heaven," was his scornful reply to a claim for pillows. None but the sick went shod. An Oxford Friar found a pair of shoes one morning, and wore them at matins. At night he dreamed that robbers leapt on him in a dangerous pass between Gloucester and Oxford with shouts of "Kill, kill!" "I am a friar," shrieked the terror-stricken brother. "You lie," was the instant answer, "for you go shod." The Friar lifted up his foot in disproof, but the shoe was there. In an agony of repentance he woke and flung the pair out of window.

*Revival of
Theology.*

It was with less success that the order struggled against the passion of the time for knowledge. Their vow of poverty, rigidly interpreted as it was by their founders, would have denied them the possession of books or materials for study. "I am your breviary, I am your breviary," Francis cried passionately to a novice who asked for a psalter. When the news of a great doctor's reception was brought to him at Paris, his countenance fell. "I am afraid, my son," he replied, "that such doctors will be the destruction of my vineyard. They are the true doctors who with the meekness of wisdom show forth good works for the edification of their neighbours." One kind of knowledge indeed their work almost forced on them. The popularity of their preaching soon led them to the deeper study of theology; within a short time after their establishment in England we find as many as thirty readers or lecturers appointed at Hereford, Leicester, Bristol, and other places, and a regular succession of teachers provided at each University. The Oxford Dominicans lectured on theology in the nave of their new church while philosophy was taught in the cloister. The first provincial of the Grey Friars built a school in their Oxford house and persuaded Grosseteste to lecture there. His influence after his promotion to the

see of Lincoln was steadily exerted to secure theological study among the Friars, as well as their establishment in the University; and in this work he was ably seconded by his scholar, Adam Marsh, or de Marisco, under whom the Franciscan school at Oxford attained a reputation throughout Christendom. Lyons, Paris, and Köln borrowed from it their professors: it was through its influence indeed that Oxford rose to a position hardly inferior to that of Paris itself as a centre of scholasticism. But the result of this powerful impulse was soon seen to be fatal to the wider intellectual activity which had till now characterized the Universities. Theology in its scholastic form resumed its supremacy in the schools. Its only efficient rivals were practical studies such as medicine and law. The last, as he was by far the greatest, instance of the freer and wider culture which had been the glory of the last century, was Roger Bacon, and no name better illustrates the rapidity and completeness with which it passed away.

Roger Bacon was the child of royalist parents who were driven into exile and reduced to poverty by the civil wars. From Oxford, where he studied under Edmund of Abingdon to whom he owed his introduction to the works of Aristotle, he passed to the University of Paris, and spent his whole heritage there in costly studies and experiments. "From my youth up," he writes, "I have laboured at the sciences and tongues. I have sought the friendship of all men among the Latins who had any reputation for knowledge. I have caused youths to be instructed in languages, geometry, arithmetic, the construction of tables and instruments, and many needful things besides." The difficulties in the way of such studies as he had resolved to pursue were immense. He was without instruments or means of experiment. "Without mathematical instruments no science can be mastered," he complains afterwards, "and these instruments are not to be found among the Latins, nor could they be made for two or three hundred

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pounds. Besides, better tables are indispensably necessary, tables on which the motions of the heavens are certified from the beginning to the end of the world without daily labour, but these tables are worth a king's ransom and could not be made without a vast expense. I have often attempted the composition of such tables, but could not finish them through failure of means and the folly of those whom I had to employ." Books were difficult and sometimes even impossible to procure. "The scientific works of Aristotle, of Avicenna, of Seneca, of Cicero, and other ancients cannot be had without great cost; their principal works have not been translated into Latin, and copies of others are not to be found in ordinary libraries or elsewhere. The admirable books of Cicero de Republica are not to be found anywhere, so far as I can hear, though I have made anxious enquiry for them in different parts of the world, and by various messengers. I could never find the works of Seneca, though I made diligent search for them during twenty years and more. And so it is with many more most useful books connected with the science of morals." It is only words like these of his own that bring home to us the keen thirst for knowledge, the patience, the energy of Roger Bacon. He returned as a teacher to Oxford, and a touching record of his devotion to those whom he taught remains in the story of John of London, a boy of fifteen, whose ability raised him above the general level of his pupils. "When he came to me as a poor boy," says Bacon in recommending him to the Pope, "I caused him to be nurtured and instructed for the love of God, especially since for aptitude and innocence I have never found so towardly a youth. Five or six years ago I caused him to be taught in languages, mathematics, and optics, and I have gratuitously instructed him with my own lips since the time that I received your mandate. There is no one at Paris who knows so much of the root of philosophy, though he has not produced the branches, flowers, and fruit because of his youth, and because he has

had no experience in teaching. But he has the means of surpassing all the Latins if he live to grow old and goes on as he has begun."

The pride with which he refers to his system of instruction was justified by the wide extension which he gave to scientific teaching in Oxford. It is probably of himself that he speaks when he tells us that "the science of optics has not hitherto been lectured on at Paris or elsewhere among the Latins, save twice at Oxford." It was a science on which he had laboured for ten years. But his teaching seems to have fallen on a barren soil. From the moment when the Friars settled in the Universities scholasticism absorbed the whole mental energy of the student world. The temper of the age was against scientific or philosophical studies. The older enthusiasm for knowledge was dying down; the study of law was the one source of promotion, whether in Church or state; philosophy was discredited, literature in its purer forms became almost extinct. After forty years of incessant study, Bacon found himself in his own words "unheard, forgotten, buried." He seems at one time to have been wealthy, but his wealth was gone. "During the twenty years that I have specially laboured in the attainment of wisdom, abandoning the path of common men, I have spent on these pursuits more than two thousand pounds, not to mention the cost of books, experiments, instruments, tables, the acquisition of languages, and the like. Add to all this the sacrifices I have made to procure the friendship of the wise and to obtain well-instructed assistants." Ruined and baffled in his hopes, Bacon listened to the counsels of his friend Grosseteste and renounced the world. He became a friar of the order of St. Francis, an order where books and study were looked upon as hindrances to the work which it had specially undertaken, that of preaching among the masses of the poor. He had written little. So far was he from attempting to write that his new superiors prohibited him from

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publishing anything under pain of forfeiture of the book and penance of bread and water. But we can see the craving of his mind, the passionate instinct of creation which marks the man of genius, in the joy with which he seized a strange opportunity that suddenly opened before him. "Some few chapters on different subjects, written at the entreaty of friends," seem to have got abroad, and were brought by one of the Pope's chaplains under the notice of Clement the Fourth. The Pope at once invited Bacon to write. But difficulties stood in his way. Materials, transcription, and other expenses for such a work as he projected would cost at least £60, and the Pope sent not a penny. Bacon begged help from his family, but they were ruined like himself. No one would lend to a mendicant friar, and when his friends raised the money he needed it was by pawning their goods in the hope of repayment from Clement. Nor was this all; the work itself, abstruse and scientific as was its subject, had to be treated in a clear and popular form to gain the Papal ear. But difficulties which would have crushed another man only roused Roger Bacon to an almost superhuman energy. By the close of 1267 the work was done. The "greater work," itself in modern form a closely printed folio, with its successive summaries and appendices in the "lesser" and the "third" works (which make a good octavo more) were produced and forwarded to the Pope within fifteen months.

*The
Opus
Magus.*

No trace of this fiery haste remains in the book itself. The "Opus Magus" is alike wonderful in plan and detail. Bacon's main purpose, in the words of Dr. Whewell, is "to urge the necessity of a reform in the mode of philosophizing, to set forth the reasons why knowledge had not made a greater progress, to draw back attention to sources of knowledge which had been unwisely neglected, to discover other sources which were yet wholly unknown, and to animate men to the undertaking by a prospect of the vast advantages which it offered." The developement of his

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scheme is on the largest scale; he gathers together the whole knowledge of his time on every branch of science which it possessed, and as he passes them in review he suggests improvements in nearly all. His labours, both here and in his after works, in the field of grammar and philology, his perseverance in insisting on the necessity of correct texts, of an accurate knowledge of languages, of an exact interpretation, are hardly less remarkable than his scientific investigations. From grammar he passes to mathematics, from mathematics to experimental philosophy. Under the name of mathematics indeed was included all the physical science of the time. "The neglect of it for nearly thirty or forty years," pleads Bacon passionately, "hath nearly destroyed the entire studies of Latin Christendom. For he who knows not mathematics cannot know any other sciences; and what is more, he cannot discover his own ignorance or find its proper remedies." Geography, chronology, arithmetic, music, are brought into something of scientific form, and like rapid sketches are given of the question of climate, hydrography, geography, and astrology. The subject of optics, his own especial study, is treated with greater fulness; he enters into the question of the anatomy of the eye besides discussing problems which lie more strictly within the province of optical science. In a word, the "Greater Work," to borrow the phrase of Dr. Whewell, is "at once the Encyclopædia and the Novum Organum of the thirteenth century." The whole of the afterworks of Roger Bacon—and treatise after treatise has of late been disinterred from our libraries—are but developements in detail of the magnificent conception he laid before Clement. Such a work was its own great reward. From the world around Roger Bacon could look for and found small recognition. No word of acknowledgement seems to have reached its author from the Pope. If we may credit a more recent story, his writings only gained him a prison from his order. "Unheard, forgotten, buried," the old man

CHAP. III. died as he had lived, and it has been reserved for later ages to roll away the obscurity that had gathered round his memory, and to place first in the great roll of modern science the name of Roger Bacon.

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Scholas-
ticism.

The failure of Bacon shows the overpowering strength of the drift towards the practical studies, and above all towards theology in its scholastic guise. Aristotle, who had been so long held at bay as the most dangerous foe of mediæval faith, was now turned by the adoption of his logical method in the discussion and definition of theological dogma into its unexpected ally. It was this very method that led to "that unprofitable subtlety and curiosity" which Lord Bacon notes as the vice of the scholastic philosophy. But "certain it is"—to continue the same great thinker's comment on the Friars—"that if these schoolmen to their great thirst of truth and unwearied travel of wit had joined variety of reading and contemplation, they had proved excellent lights to the great advancement of all learning and knowledge." What, amidst all their errors, they undoubtedly did was to insist on the necessity of rigid demonstration and a more exact use of words, to introduce a clear and methodical treatment of all subjects into discussion, and above all to substitute an appeal to reason for unquestioning obedience to authority. It was by this critical tendency, by the new clearness and precision which scholasticism gave to enquiry, that in spite of the trivial questions with which it often concerned itself it trained the human mind through the next two centuries to a temper which fitted it to profit by the great disclosure of knowledge that brought about the Renaissance. And it is to the same spirit of fearless enquiry as well as to the strong popular sympathies which their very constitution necessitated that we must attribute the influence which the Friars undoubtedly exerted in the coming struggle between the people and the Crown. Their position is clearly and strongly marked throughout the whole contest. The

University of Oxford, which soon fell under the direction of their teaching, stood first in its resistance to Papal exactions and its claim of English liberty. The classes in the towns, on whom the influence of the Friars told most directly, were steady supporters of freedom throughout the Barons' Wars.

Politically indeed the teaching of the schoolmen was of immense value, for it set on a religious basis and gave an intellectual form to the constitutional theory of the relations between King and people which was slowly emerging from the struggle with the Crown. In assuming the responsibility of a Christian king to God for the good government of his realm, in surrounding the pledges whether of ruler or ruled with religious sanctions, the mediæval Church entered its protest against any personal despotism. The schoolmen pushed further still to the doctrine of a contract between king and people; and their trenchant logic made short work of the royal claims to irresponsible power and unquestioning obedience. "He who would be in truth a king," ran a poem which embodies their teaching at this time in pungent verse—"he is a 'free king' indeed if he rightly rule himself and his realm. All things are lawful to him for the government of his realm, but nothing is lawful to him for its destruction. It is one thing to rule according to a king's duty, another to destroy a kingdom by resisting the law." "Let the community of the realm advise, and let it be known what the generality, to whom their laws are best known, think on the matter. They who are ruled by the laws know those laws best; they who make daily trial of them are best acquainted with them; and since it is their own affairs which are at stake they will take the more care and will act with an eye to their own peace." "It concerns the community to see what sort of men ought justly to be chosen for the weal of the realm." The constitutional restrictions on the royal authority, the right of the whole nation to deliberate and decide on its own affairs

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1232.

Its
Political
Influence.

CHAP. II. and to have a voice in the selection of the administrators of government, had never been so clearly stated before. But the importance of the Friar's work lay in this, that the work of the scholar was supplemented by that of the popular preacher. The theory of government wrought out in cell and lecture-room was carried over the length and breadth of the land by the mendicant brother, begging his way from town to town, chatting with farmer or housewife at the cottage door, and setting up his portable pulpit in village green or market-place. His open-air sermons, ranging from impassioned devotion to coarse story and homely mother wit, became the journals as well as the homilies of the day; political and social questions found place in them side by side with spiritual matters; and the rudest countryman learned his tale of a king's oppression or a patriot's hopes as he listened to the rambling passionate, humorous discourse of the begging friar.

Henry the Third.

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Never had there been more need of such a political education of the whole people than at the moment we have reached. For the triumph of the Charter, the constitutional government of Governor and Justiciar, had rested mainly on the helplessness of the King. As boy or youth, Henry the Third had bowed to the control of William Marshal or Langton or Hubert de Burgh. But he was now grown to manhood, and his character was from this hour to tell on the events of his reign. From the cruelty, the lust, the impiety of his father the young King was absolutely free. There was a geniality, a vivacity, a refinement in his temper which won a personal affection for him even in his worst days from some who bitterly censured his rule. The Abbey-church of Westminster, with which he replaced the ruder minster of the Confessor, remains a monument of his artistic taste. He was a patron and friend of men of letters, and himself skilled in the "gay science" of the troubadour. But of the political capacity which was the characteristic of his house he had little or none.

Profuse, changeable, false from sheer meanness of spirit, impulsive alike in good and ill, unbridled in temper and tongue, reckless in insult and wit, Henry's delight was in the display of an empty and prodigal magnificence, his one notion of government was a dream of arbitrary power. But frivolous as the King's mood was, he clung with a weak man's obstinacy to a distinct line of policy; and this was the policy not of Hubert or Langton but of John. He cherished the hope of recovering his heritage across the sea. He believed in the absolute power of the Crown; and looked on the pledges of the Great Charter as promises which force had wrested from the King and which force could wrest back again. France was telling more and more on English opinion; and the claim which the French kings were advancing to a divine and absolute power gave a sanction in Henry's mind to the claim of absolute authority which was still maintained by his favourite advisers in the royal council. Above all he clung to the alliance with the Papacy. Henry was personally devout; and his devotion only bound him the more firmly to his father's system of friendship with Rome. Gratitude and self-interest alike bound him to the Papal See. Rome had saved him from ruin as a child; its legate had set the crown on his head; its threats and excommunications had foiled Lewis and built up again a royal party. Above all it was Rome which could alone free him from his oath to the Charter, and which could alone defend him if like his father he had to front the baronage in arms.

His temper was now to influence the whole system of government. In 1227 Henry declared himself of age; and though Hubert still remained Justiciar every year saw him more powerless in his struggle with the tendencies of the King. The death of Stephen Langton in 1228 was a yet heavier blow to English freedom. In persuading Rome to withdraw her Legate the Primate had averted a conflict between the national desire for self-government

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*England
and Rome.*

CHAP. II. and the Papal claims of overlordship. But his death gave the signal for a more serious struggle, for it was in the oppression of the Church of England by the Popes through the reign of Henry that the little rift first opened which was destined to widen into the gulf that parted the one from the other at the Reformation. In the mediæval theory of the Papacy, as Innocent and his successors held it, Christendom, as a spiritual realm of which the Popes were the head, took the feudal form of the secular realms which lay within its pale. The Pope was its sovereign, the Bishops were his barons, and the clergy were his under vassals. As the King demanded aids and subsidies in case of need from his liegemen, so in the theory of Rome might the head of the Church demand aid in need from the priesthood. And at this moment the need of the Popes was sore. Rome had plunged into her desperate conflict with the Emperor, Frederick the Second, and was looking everywhere for the means of recruiting her drained exchequer. On England she believed herself to have more than a spiritual claim for support. She regarded the kingdom as a vassal kingdom, and as bound to aid its overlord. It was only by the promise of a heavy subsidy that Henry in 1229 could buy the Papal confirmation of Langton's successor. But the baronage was of other mind than Henry as to this claim of overlordship, and the demand of an aid to Rome from the laity was at once rejected by them. Her spiritual claim over the allegiance of the clergy however remained to fall back upon, and the clergy were in the Pope's hand. Gregory the Ninth had already claimed for the Papal see a right of nomination to some prebends in each cathedral church; he now demanded a tithe of all the moveables of the priesthood, and a threat of excommunication silenced their murmurs. Exaction followed exaction as the needs of the Papal treasury grew greater. The very rights of lay patrons were set aside, and under the name of "reserves" presentations to English benefices were sold in the Papal

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market, while Italian clergy were quartered on the best livings of the Church.

The general indignation at last found vent in a wide conspiracy. In 1231 letters from "the whole body of those who prefer to die rather than be ruined by the Romans" were scattered over the kingdom by armed men; tithes gathered for the Pope or the foreign priests were seized and given to the poor; the Papal collectors were beaten and their bulls trodden under foot. The remonstrances of Rome only made clearer the national character of the movement; but as enquiry went on the hand of the Justiciar himself was seen to have been at work. Sheriffs had stood idly by while violence was done; royal letters had been shown by the rioters as approving their acts; and the Pope openly laid the charge of the outbreak on the secret connivance of Hubert de Burgh. No charge could have been more fatal to Hubert in the mind of the King. But he was already in full collision with the Justiciar on other grounds. Henry was eager to vindicate his right to the great heritage his father had lost: the Gascons, who still clung to him, not because they loved England but because they hated France, spurred him to war; and in 1229 a secret invitation came from the Norman barons. But while Hubert held power no serious effort was made to carry on a foreign strife. The Norman call was rejected through his influence, and when a great armament gathered at Portsmouth for a campaign in Poitou it dispersed for want of transport and supplies. The young King drew his sword and rushed madly on the Justiciar, charging him with treason and corruption by the gold of France. But the quarrel was appeased and the expedition deferred for the year. In 1230 Henry actually took the field in Brittany and Poitou, but the failure of the campaign was again laid at the door of Hubert whose opposition was said to have prevented a decisive engagement. It was at this moment that the Papal accusation filled up the measure of Henry's wrath against his minister. In the

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Fall of
Hubert de
Burgh.

CHAP. II. summer of 1232 he was deprived of his office of Justiciar, and dragged from a chapel at Brentwood where threats of death had driven him to take sanctuary. A smith who was ordered to shackle him stoutly refused. "I will die any death" he said "before I put iron on the man who freed England from the stranger and saved Dover from France." The remonstrances of the Bishop of London forced the King to replace Hubert in sanctuary, but hunger compelled him to surrender; he was thrown a prisoner into the Tower, and though soon released he remained powerless in the realm. His fall left England without a check to the rule of Henry himself.

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Third.
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CHAPTER III.

THE BARONS' WAR.

1232—1272.

ONCE master of his realm, Henry the Third was quick to declare his plan of government. The two great checks on a merely personal rule lay as yet in the authority of the great ministers of State and in the national character of the administrative body which had been built up by Henry the Second. Both of these checks Henry at once set himself to remove. He would be his own minister. The Justiciar ceased to be the Lieutenant-General of the King and dwindled into a presiding judge of the law-courts. The Chancellor had grown into a great officer of State, and in 1226 this office had been conferred on the Bishop of Chichester by the advice and consent of the Great Council. But Henry succeeded in wresting the seal from him and naming to this as to other offices at his pleasure. His policy was to entrust all high posts of government to mere clerks of the royal chapel; trained administrators, but wholly dependent on the royal will. He found equally dependent agents of administration by surrounding himself with foreigners. The return of Peter des Roches to the royal councils was the first sign of the new system; and hosts of hungry Poitevins and Bretons were summoned over to occupy the royal castles and fill the judicial and administrative posts about the Court. The King's marriage in 1236 to Eleanor of Provence was followed by the arrival in England of the new Queen's uncles. The

*The
Aliens.*

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"Savoy," as his house in the Strand was named, still recalls Peter of Savoy who arrived five years later to take for a while the chief place at Henry's council-board; another brother, Boniface, was consecrated on Archbishop Edmund's death to the highest post in the realm save the Crown itself, the Archbishopric of Canterbury. The young Primate, like his brother, brought with him foreign fashions strange enough to English folk. His armed retainers pillaged the markets. His own archiepiscopal fist felled to the ground the prior of St. Bartholomew-by-Smithfield who opposed his visitation. London was roused by the outrage; on the King's refusal to do justice a noisy crowd of citizens surrounded the Primate's house at Lambeth with cries of vengeance, and the "handsome archbishop," as his followers styled him, was glad to escape over sea. This brood of Provençals was followed in 1243 by the arrival of the Poitevin relatives of John's queen, Isabella of Angoulême. Aymer was made Bishop of Winchester; William of Valence received at a later time the earldom of Pembroke. Even the King's jester was a Poitevin. Hundreds of their dependants followed these great nobles to find a fortune in the English realm. The Poitevin lords brought in their train a bevy of ladies in search of husbands, and three English earls who were in royal wardship were wedded by the King to foreigners. The whole machinery of administration passed into the hands of men who were ignorant and contemptuous of the principles of English government or English law. Their rule was a mere anarchy; the very retainers of the royal household turned robbers and pillaged foreign merchants in the precincts of the Court; corruption invaded the judicature; at the close of this period of misrule Henry de Bath, a justiciary, was proved to have openly taken bribes and to have adjudged to himself disputed estates.

Henry
and the
Baronage.

That misgovernment of this kind should have gone on unchecked in defiance of the provisions of the Charter was owing to the disunion and sluggishness of the English

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baronage. On the first arrival of the foreigners Richard, the Earl Mareschal, a son of the great Regent, stood forth as their leader to demand the expulsion of the strangers from the royal Council. Though deserted by the bulk of the nobles he defeated the foreign troops sent against him and forced the King to treat for peace. But at this critical moment the Earl was drawn by an intrigue of Peter des Roches to Ireland; he fell in a petty skirmish, and the barons were left without a head. The interposition of a new primate, Edmund of Abingdon, forced the King to dismiss Peter from court; but there was no real change of system, and the remonstrances of the Archbishop and of Robert Grosseteste, the Bishop of Lincoln, remained fruitless. In the long interval of misrule the financial straits of the King forced him to heap exaction on exaction. The Forest Laws were used as a means of extortion, sees and abbeys were kept vacant, loans were wrested from lords and prelates, the Court itself lived at free quarters wherever it moved. Supplies of this kind however were utterly insufficient to defray the cost of the King's prodigality. A sixth of the royal revenue was wasted in pensions to foreign favourites. The debts of the Crown amounted to four times its annual income. Henry was forced to appeal for aid to the great Council of the realm, and aid was granted in 1237 on promise of control in its expenditure and on condition that the King confirmed the Charter. But Charter and promise were alike disregarded; and in 1242 the resentment of the barons expressed itself in a determined protest and a refusal of further subsidies. In spite of their refusal however Henry gathered money enough for a costly expedition for the recovery of Poitou. The attempt ended in failure and shame. At Taillebourg the King's force fled in disgraceful rout before the French as far as Saintes, and only the sudden illness of Lewis the Ninth and a disease which scattered his army saved Bordeaux from the conquerors. The treasury was utterly drained, and

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1272.*Simon of
Montfort.*

Henry was driven in 1244 to make a fresh appeal with his own mouth to the baronage. But the barons had now rallied to a plan of action, and we can hardly fail to attribute their union to the man who appears at their head. This was the Earl of Leicester, Simon of Montfort.

Simon was the son of another Simon of Montfort, whose name had become memorable for his ruthless crusade against the Albigensian heretics in Southern Gaul, and who had inherited the Earldom of Leicester through his mother, a sister and co-heiress of the last Earl of the house of Beaumont. But as Simon's tendencies were for the most part French John had kept the revenues of the earldom in his own hands, and on his death the claim of his elder son, Amaury, was met by the refusal of Henry the Third to accept a divided allegiance. The refusal marks the rapid growth of that sentiment of nationality which the loss of Normandy had brought home. Amaury chose to remain French, and by a family arrangement with the King's sanction the honour of Leicester passed in 1231 to his younger brother Simon. His choice made Simon an Englishman, but his foreign blood still moved the jealousy of the barons, and this jealousy was quickened by a secret match in 1238 with Eleanor, the King's sister and widow of the second William Marshal. The match formed probably part of a policy which Henry pursued throughout his reign of bringing the great earldoms into closer connexion with the Crown. That of Chester had fallen to the King through the extinction of the family of its earls; Cornwall was held by his brother, Richard; Salisbury by his cousin. Simon's marriage linked the Earldom of Leicester to the royal house. But it at once brought Simon into conflict with the nobles and the Church. The baronage, justly indignant that such a step should have been taken without their consent, for the Queen still remained childless and Eleanor's children by one whom they looked on as a stranger promised to be heirs of the Crown, rose in a revolt which

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early
action.*

failed only through the desertion of their head, Earl Richard of Cornwall, who was satisfied with Earl Simon's withdrawal from the Royal Council. The censures of the Church on Eleanor's breach of a vow of chaste widowhood which she had made at her first husband's death were averted with hardly less difficulty by a journey to Rome. It was after a year of trouble that Simon returned to England to reap as it seemed the fruits of his high alliance. He was now formally made Earl of Leicester and re-entered the Royal Council. But it is probable that he still found there the old jealousy which had forced from him a pledge of retirement after his marriage; and that his enemies now succeeded in winning over the King. In a few months, at any rate, he found the changeable King alienated from him, he was driven by a burst of royal passion from the realm, and was forced to spend seven months in France.

Henry's anger passed as quickly as it had risen, and in the spring of 1240 the Earl was again received with honour at court. It was from this moment however that his position changed. As yet it had been that of a foreigner, confounded in the eyes of the nation at large with the Poitevins and Provençals who swarmed about the court. But in the years of retirement which followed Simon's return to England his whole attitude was reversed. There was as yet no quarrel with the King: he followed him in a campaign across the Channel, and shared in his defeat at Saintes. But he was a friend of Grosseteste and a patron of the Friars, and became at last known as a steady opponent of the misrule about him. When prelates and barons chose twelve representatives to confer with Henry in 1244 Simon stood with Earl Richard of Cornwall at the head of them. A definite plan of reform disclosed his hand. The confirmation of the Charter was to be followed by the election of Justiciar, Chancellor, Treasurer in the Great Council. Nor was this restoration of a responsible ministry enough; a perpetual Council was to attend the King and devise further reforms. The plan broke against

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Henry's resistance and a Papal prohibition; but from this time the Earl took his stand in the front rank of the patriot leaders. The struggle of the following years was chiefly with the exactions of the Papacy, and Simon was one of the first to sign the protest which the Parliament in 1246 addressed to the court of Rome. He was present at the Lent Parliament of 1248, and we can hardly doubt that he shared in its bold rebuke of the King's misrule and its renewed demand for the appointment of the higher officers of state by the Council. It was probably a sense of the danger of leaving at home such a centre of all efforts after reform that brought Henry to send him in the autumn of 1248 as Seneschal of Gascony to save for the Crown the last of its provinces over sea.

*Simon in
Gascony.*

Threatened by France and by Navarre without as well as by revolt within, the loss of Gascony seemed close at hand; but in a few months the stern rule of the new Seneschal had quelled every open foe within or without its bounds. To bring the province to order proved a longer and a harder task. Its nobles were like the robber-nobles of the Rhine: "they rode the country by night," wrote the Earl, "like thieves, in parties of twenty or thirty or forty," and gathered in leagues against the Seneschal, who set himself to exact their dues to the Crown and to shield merchant and husbandman from their violence. For four years Earl Simon steadily warred down these robber bands, storming castles where there was need, and bridling the wilder country with a chain of forts. Hard as the task was, his real difficulty lay at home. Henry sent neither money nor men; and the Earl had to raise both from his own resources, while the men whom he was fighting found friends in Henry's council-chamber. Again and again Simon was recalled to answer charges of tyranny and extortion made by the Gascon nobles and pressed by his enemies at home on the King. Henry's feeble and impulsive temper left him open to pressure like this; and though each absence of the Earl from the province was a signal for fresh outbreaks of disorder which

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only his presence repressed, the deputies of its nobles were still admitted to the council-table and commissions sent over to report on the Seneschal's administration. The strife came to a head in 1252, when the commissioners reported that stern as Simon's rule had been the case was one in which sternness was needful. The English barons supported Simon, and in the face of their verdict Henry was powerless. But the King was now wholly with his enemies; and his anger broke out in a violent altercation. The Earl offered to resign his post if the money he had spent was repaid him, and appealed to Henry's word. Henry hotly retorted that he was bound by no promise to a false traitor. Simon at once gave Henry the lie; "and but that thou bearest the name of King it had been a bad hour for thee when thou utteredst such a word!" A formal reconciliation was brought about, and the Earl once more returned to Gascony, but before winter had come he was forced to withdraw to France. The greatness of his reputation was shown in an offer which its nobles made him of the regency of their realm during the absence of King Lewis from the land. But the offer was refused; and Henry, who had himself undertaken the pacification of Gascony, was glad before the close of 1253 to recall its old ruler to do the work he had failed to do.

The Earl's character had now thoroughly developed. He inherited the strict and severe piety of his father; he was assiduous in his attendance on religious services whether by night or day. In his correspondence with Adam Marsh we see him finding patience under his Gascon troubles in a perusal of the Book of Job. His life was pure and singularly temperate; he was noted for his scant indulgence in meat, drink, or sleep. Socially he was cheerful and pleasant in talk; but his natural temper was quick and ardent, his sense of honour keen, his speech rapid and trenchant. His impatience of contradiction, his fiery temper, were in fact the great stumbling-blocks in his after career. His best friends marked honestly

*Simon's
temper.*

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this fault, and it shows the greatness of the man that he listened to their remonstrances. "Better is a patient man," writes honest Friar Adam, "than a strong man, and he who can rule his own temper than he who storms a city." But the one characteristic which overmastered all was what men at that time called his "constancy," the firm immovable resolve which trampled even death under foot in its loyalty to the right. The motto which Edward the First chose as his device, "Keep troth," was far truer as the device of Earl Simon. We see in his correspondence with what a clear discernment of its difficulties both at home and abroad he "thought it unbecoming to decline the danger of so great an exploit" as the reduction of Gascony to peace and order; but once undertaken, he persevered in spite of the opposition he met with, the failure of all support or funds from England, and the King's desertion of his cause, till the work was done. There was the same steadiness of will and purpose in his patriotism. The letters of Robert Grosseteste show how early Simon had learned to sympathize with the Bishop in his resistance to Rome, and at the crisis of the contest he offered him his own support and that of his associates. But Robert passed away, and as the tide of misgovernment mounted higher and higher the Earl silently trained himself for the day of trial. The fruit of his self-discipline was seen when the crisis came. While other men wavered and faltered and fell away, the enthusiastic love of the people clung to the grave, stern soldier who "stood like a pillar," unshaken by promise or threat or fear of death, by the oath he had sworn.

Matthew
Paris.

While Simon had been warring with Gascon rebels affairs in England had been going from bad to worse. The scourge of Papal taxation fell heavier on the clergy. After vain appeals to Rome and to the King, Archbishop Edmund retired to an exile of despair at Pontigny, and tax-gatherer after tax-gatherer with powers of excommunication, suspension from orders, and presentation to benefices,

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descended on the unhappy priesthood. The wholesale pillage kindled a wide spirit of resistance. Oxford gave the signal by hunting a papal legate out of the city amid cries of "usurer" and "simoniac" from the mob of students. Fulk Fitz-Warenne in the name of the barons bade a Papal collector begone out of England. "If you tarry here three days longer," he added, "you and your company shall be cut to pieces." For a time Henry himself was swept away by the tide of national indignation. Letters from the King, the nobles, and the prelates, protested against the Papal exactions, and orders were given that no money should be exported from the realm. But the threat of interdict soon drove Henry back on a policy of spoliation in which he went hand in hand with Rome. The temper which this oppression begot among even the most sober churchmen has been preserved for us by an annalist whose pages glow with the new outburst of patriotic feeling. Matthew Paris is the greatest, as he in reality is the last, of our monastic historians. The school of St. Alban's survived indeed till a far later time, but its writers dwindle into mere annalists whose view is bounded by the abbey precincts and whose work is as colourless as it is jejune. In Matthew the breadth and precision of the narrative, the copiousness of his information on topics whether national or European, the general fairness and justice of his comments, are only surpassed by the patriotic fire and enthusiasm of the whole. He had succeeded Roger of Wendover as chronicler at St. Alban's; and the Greater Chronicle with an abridgement of it which long passed under the name of Matthew of Westminster, a "History of the English," and the "Lives of the Earlier Abbots," are only a few among the voluminous works which attest his prodigious industry. He was an artist as well as an historian, and many of the manuscripts which are preserved are illustrated by his own hand. A large circle of correspondents—bishops like Grosseteste, ministers like Hubert de Burgh, officials like Alexander

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de Swereford—furnished him with minute accounts of political and ecclesiastical proceedings. Pilgrims from the East and Papal agents brought news of foreign events to his scriptorium at St. Alban's. He had access to and quotes largely from state documents, charters, and exchequer rolls. The frequency of royal visits to the abbey brought him a store of political intelligence, and Henry himself contributed to the great chronicle which has preserved with so terrible a faithfulness the memory of his weakness and misgovernment. On one solemn feast-day the King recognized Matthew, and bidding him sit on the middle step between the floor and the throne begged him to write the story of the day's proceedings. While on a visit to St. Alban's he invited him to his table and chamber, and enumerated by name two hundred and fifty of the English baronies for his information. But all this royal patronage has left little mark on his work. "The case," as Matthew says, "of historical writers is hard, for if they tell the truth they provoke men, and if they write what is false they offend God." With all the fullness of the school of court historians, such as Benedict and Hoveden, to which in form he belonged Matthew Paris combines an independence and patriotism which is strange to their pages. He denounces with the same unsparing energy the oppression of the Papacy and of the King. His point of aim is neither that of a courtier nor of a churchman but of an Englishman, and the new national tone of his chronicle is but the echo of a national sentiment which at last bound nobles and yeomen and churchmen together into a people resolute to wrest freedom from the Crown.

Wales.

The nation was outraged like the Church. Two solemn confirmations of the Charter failed to bring about any compliance with its provisions. In 1248, in 1249, and again in 1255 the great Council fruitlessly renewed its demand for a regular ministry, and the growing resolve of the nobles to enforce good government was seen in their offer of a grant on condition that the great officers of the

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Crown were appointed in the Council of the Baronage. But Henry refused their offer with scorn and sold his plate to the citizens of London to find payment for his household. A spirit of mutinous defiance broke out on the failure of all legal remedy. When the Earl of Norfolk refused him aid Henry answered with a threat. "I will send reapers and reap your fields for you," he said. "And I will send you back the heads of your reapers," replied the Earl. Hampered by the profusion of the court and the refusal of supplies, the Crown was in fact penniless; and yet never was money more wanted, for a trouble which had long pressed upon the English kings had now grown to a height that called for decisive action. Even his troubles at home could not blind Henry to the need of dealing with the difficulty of Wales. Of the three Welsh states into which all that remained unconquered of Britain had been broken by the victories of Deorham and Chester, two had long ceased to exist. The country between the Clyde and the Dee had been gradually absorbed by the conquests of Northumbria and the growth of the Scot monarchy. West Wales, between the British Channel and the estuary of the Severn, had yielded to the sword of Ecgeberht. But a fiercer resistance prolonged the independence of the great central portion which alone in modern language preserves the name of Wales. Comprizing in itself the largest and most powerful of the British kingdoms, it was aided in its struggle against Mercia by the weakness of its assailant, the youngest and feeblest of the English states, as well as by an internal warfare which distracted the energies of the invaders. But Mercia had no sooner risen to supremacy among the English kingdoms than it took the work of conquest vigorously in hand. Offa tore from Wales the border land between the Severn and the Wye; the raids of his successors carried fire and sword into the heart of the country; and an acknowledgement of the Mercian over-lordship was wrested from the Welsh princes. On the fall of

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Mercia this overlordship passed to the West-Saxon kings, and the Laws of Howel Dda own the payment of a yearly tribute by "the prince of Aberffraw" to "the King of London." The weakness of England during her long struggle with the Danes revived the hopes of British independence; it was the co-operation of the Welsh on which the Northmen reckoned in their attack on the house of Egberht. But with the fall of the Danelagh the British princes were again brought to submission, and when in the midst of the Confessor's reign the Welsh seized on a quarrel between the houses of Leofric and Godwine to cross the border and carry their attacks into England itself, the victories of Harold re-asserted the English supremacy. Disembarking on the coast his light-armed troops he penetrated to the heart of the mountains, and the successors of the Welsh prince Gruffydd, whose head was the trophy of the campaign, swore to observe the old fealty and render the whole tribute to the English Crown.

Wales
and the
Normans.

A far more desperate struggle began when the wave of Norman conquest broke on the Welsh frontier. A chain of great earldoms, settled by William along the border-land, at once bridled the old marauding forays. From his county palatine of Chester Hugh the Wolf harried Flintshire into a desert, Robert of Belesme in his earldom of Shrewsbury "slew the Welsh," says a chronicler, "like sheep, conquered them, enslaved them and flayed them with nails of iron." The earldom of Gloucester curbed Britain along the lower Severn. Backed by these greater baronies a horde of lesser adventurers obtained the royal "licence to make conquest on the Welsh." Monmouth and Aber-gavenny were seized and guarded by Norman castellans; Bernard of Neufmarché won the lordship of Brecknock; Roger of Montgomery raised the town and fortress in Powysland which still preserves his name. A great rising of the whole people in the days of the second William won back some of this Norman spoil. The new castle of Montgomery was burned, Brecknock and Cardigan

were cleared of the invaders, and the Welsh poured ravaging over the English border. Twice the Red King carried his arms fruitlessly among the mountains against enemies who took refuge in their fastnesses till famine and hardship drove his broken host into retreat. The wiser policy of Henry the First fell back on his father's system of gradual conquest. A new tide of invasion flowed along the southern coast, where the land was level and open and accessible from the sea. The attack was aided by strife in the country itself. Robert Fitz-Hamo, the lord of Gloucester, was summoned to his aid by a Welsh chieftain; and his defeat of Rhys ap Tewdor, the last prince under whom Southern Wales was united, produced an anarchy which enabled Robert to land safely on the coast of Glamorgan, to conquer the country round, and to divide it among his soldiers. A force of Flemings and Englishmen followed the Earl of Clare as he landed near Milford Haven and pushing back the British inhabitants settled a "Little England" in the present Pembrokeshire. A few daring adventurers accompanied the Norman Lord of Kemeys into Cardigan, where land might be had for the winning by any one who would "wage war on the Welsh."

It was at this moment, when the utter subjugation of the British race seemed at hand, that a new outburst of energy rolled back the tide of invasion and changed the fitful resistance of the separate Welsh provinces into a national effort to regain independence. To all outer seeming Wales had become utterly barbarous. Stripped of every vestige of the older Roman civilization by ages of bitter warfare, of civil strife, of estrangement from the general culture of Christendom, the unconquered Britons had sunk into a mass of savage herdsmen, clad in the skins and fed by the milk of the cattle they tended. Faithless, greedy, and revengeful, retaining no higher political organization than that of the clan, their strength was broken by ruthless feuds, and they were united only in battle or in raid against the stranger. But in the heart of the wild people

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CHAP. III. there still lingered a spark of the poetic fire which had nerved it four hundred years before through Aneurin and Llywarch Hen to its struggle with the earliest Englishmen. At the hour of its lowest degradation the silence of Wales was suddenly broken by a crowd of singers. The song of the twelfth century burst forth, not from one bard or another, but from the nation at large. The Welsh temper indeed was steeped in poetry. "In every house," says the shrewd Gerald du Barri, "strangers who arrived in the morning were entertained till eventide with the talk of maidens and the music of the harp." A romantic literature, which was destined to leaven the fancy of western Europe, had grown up among this wild people and found an admirable means of utterance in its tongue. The Welsh language was as real a developement of the old Celtic language heard by Cæsar as the Romance tongues are developements of Cæsar's Latin, but at a far earlier date than any other language of modern Europe it had attained to definite structure and to settled literary form. No other mediæval literature shows at its outset the same elaborate and completed organization as that of the Welsh. But within these settled forms the Celtic fancy played with a startling freedom. In one of the later poems Gwion the Little transforms himself into a hare, a fish, a bird, a grain of wheat; but he is only the symbol of the strange shapes in which the Celtic fancy embodies itself in the romantic tales which reached their highest perfection in the legends of Arthur.

*The
Welsh
Poetry.*

The gay extravagance of these "Mabinogion" flings defiance to all fact, tradition, probability, and revels in the impossible and unreal. When Arthur sails into the unknown world it is in a ship of glass. The "descent into hell," as a Celtic poet paints it, shakes off the mediæval horror with the mediæval reverence, and the knight who achieves the quest spends his years of infernal durance in hunting and minstrelsy, and in converse with fair women. The world of the

Mabinogion is a world of pure phantasy, a new earth of marvels and enchantments, of dark forests whose silence is broken by the hermit's bell and sunny glades where the light plays on the hero's armour. Each figure as it moves across the poet's canvas is bright with glancing colour. "The maiden was clothed in a robe of flame-coloured silk, and about her neck was a collar of ruddy gold in which were precious emeralds and rubies. Her head was of brighter gold than the flower of the broom, her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave, and fairer were her hands and her fingers than the blossoms of the wood-anemone amidst the spray of the meadow fountain. The eye of the trained hawk, the glance of the falcon, was not brighter than hers. Her bosom was more snowy than the breast of the white swan, her cheek was redder than the reddest roses." Everywhere there is an Oriental profusion of gorgeous imagery, but the gorgeousness is seldom oppressive. The sensibility of the Celtic temper, so quick to perceive beauty, so eager in its thirst for life, its emotions, its adventures, its sorrows, its joys, is tempered by a passionate melancholy that expresses its revolt against the impossible, by an instinct of what is noble, by a sentiment that discovers the weird charm of nature. The wildest extravagance of the tale-teller is relieved by some graceful play of pure fancy, some tender note of feeling, some magical touch of beauty. As Kalweh's greyhounds bound from side to side of their master's steed, they "sport round him like two sea-swallows." His spear is "swifter than the fall of the dewdrop from the blade of reed-grass upon the earth when the dew of June is at the heaviest." A subtle, observant love of nature and natural beauty takes fresh colour from the passionate human sentiment with which it is imbued. "I love the birds" sings Gwalchmai "and their sweet voices in the lulling songs of the wood;" he watches at night beside the fords "among the untrodden grass" to hear the nightingale and watch the play of the sea-mew.

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Even patriotism takes the same picturesque form. The Welsh poet hates the flat and sluggish land of the Saxon; as he dwells on his own he tells of "its sea-coast and its mountains, its towns on the forest border, its fair landscape, its dales, its waters, and its valleys, its white sea-mews, its beauteous women." Here as everywhere the sentiment of nature passes swiftly and subtly into the sentiment of a human tenderness: "I love its fields clothed with tender trefoil" goes on the song; "I love the marches of Merioneth where my head was pillowed on a snow-white arm." In the Celtic love of woman there is little of the Teutonic depth and earnestness, but in its stead a childlike spirit of delicate enjoyment, a faint distant flush of passion like the rose-light of dawn on a snowy mountain peak, a playful delight in beauty. "White is my love as the apple blossom, as the ocean's spray; her face shines like the pearly dew on Eryri; the glow of her cheeks is like the light of sunset." The buoyant and elastic temper of the French *trouveur* was spiritualized in the Welsh singers by a more refined poetic feeling. "Whoso beheld her was filled with her love. Four white trefoils sprang up wherever she trod." A touch of pure fancy such as this removes its object out of the sphere of passion into one of delight and reverence.

The
Bards.

It is strange to pass from the world of actual Welsh history into such a world as this. But side by side with this wayward, fanciful stream of poesy and romance ran a torrent of intenser song. The spirit of the earlier bards, their joy in battle, their love of freedom, broke out anew in ode after ode, in songs extravagant, monotonous, often prosaic, but fused into poetry by the intense fire of patriotism which glowed within them. Every fight, every hero had its verse. The names of older singers, of Taliesin, Aneurin, and Ilywarch Hen, were revived in bold forgeries to animate the national resistance and to prophesy victory. It was in North Wales that the spirit of patriotism received its strongest inspiration from this burst of song.

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Again and again Henry the Second was driven to retreat from the impregnable fastnesses where the "Lords of Snowdon," the princes of the house of Gruffydd ap Conan, claimed supremacy over the whole of Wales. Once in the pass of Consilt a cry arose that the King was slain, Henry of Essex flung down the royal standard, and the King's desperate efforts could hardly save his army from utter rout. The bitter satire of the Welsh singers bade him knight his horse, since its speed had alone saved him from capture. In a later campaign the invaders were met by storms of rain, and forced to abandon their baggage in a headlong flight to Chester. The greatest of the Welsh odes, that known to English readers in Gray's translation as "The Triumph of Owen," is Gwalchmai's song of victory over the repulse of an English fleet from Abermenai.

The long reign of Llewelyn the son of Jorwerth seemed destined to realize the hopes of his countrymen. The homage which he succeeded in extorting from the whole of the Welsh chieftains during a reign which lasted from 1194 to 1240 placed him openly at the head of his race, and gave a new character to its struggle with the English King. In consolidating his authority within his own domains, and in the assertion of his lordship over the princes of the south, Llewelyn ap Jorwerth aimed steadily at securing the means of striking off the yoke of the Saxon. It was in vain that John strove to buy his friendship by the hand of his natural daughter Johanna. Fresh raids on the Marches forced the King to enter Wales in 1211; but though his army reached Snowdon it fell back like its predecessors, starved and broken before an enemy it could never reach. A second attack in the same year had better success. The chieftains of South Wales were drawn from their new allegiance to join the English forces, and Llewelyn, prisoned in his fastnesses, was at last driven to submit. But the ink of the treaty was hardly dry before Wales was again on fire; a common fear of the English once more united its

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ap
Jorwerth.

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chieftains, and the war between John and his barons soon removed all dread of a new invasion. Absolved from his allegiance to an excommunicated King, and allied with the barons under Fitzwalter—too glad to enlist in their cause a prince who could hold in check the nobles of the border country where the royalist cause was strongest—Llewelyn seized his opportunity to reduce Shrewsbury, to annex Powys, the central district of Wales where the English influence had always been powerful, to clear the royal garrisons from Caermarthen and Cardigan, and to force even the Flemings of Pembroke to do him homage.

England watched these efforts of the subject race with an anger still mingled with contempt. "Who knows not," exclaims Matthew Paris as he dwells on the new pretensions of the Welsh ruler, "who knows not that the Prince of Wales is a petty vassal of the King of England?" But the temper of Llewelyn's own people was far other than the temper of the English chronicler. The hopes of Wales rose higher and higher with each triumph of the Lord of Snowdon. His court was crowded with bardic singers. "He pours," sings one of them, "his gold into the lap of the bard as the ripe fruit falls from the trees." Gold however was hardly needed to wake their enthusiasm. Poet after poet sang of "the Devastator of England," the "Eagle of men that loves not to lie nor sleep," "towering above the rest of men with his long red lance," his "red helmet of battle crested with a fierce wolf." "The sound of his coming is like the roar of the wave as it rushes to the shore, that can neither be stayed nor hushed." Lesser bards strung together Llewelyn's victories in rough jingle of rime and hounded him on to the slaughter. "Be of good courage in the slaughter," sings Elidir, "cling to thy work, destroy England, and plunder its multitudes." A fierce thirst for blood runs through the abrupt, passionate verses of the court singers. "Swansea, that tranquil town, was broken in heaps," bursts out a triumphant bard; "St. Clears, with its bright white lands, it is not Saxons who hold it now!"

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"In Swansea, the key of Lloegria, we made widows of all the wives." "The dread Eagle is wont to lay corpses in rows, and to feast with the leader of wolves and with hovering ravens glutted with flesh, butchers with keen scent of carcases." "Better," closes the song, "better the grave than the life of man who sighs when the horns call him forth to the squares of battle."

But even in bardic verse Llewelyn rises high out of the mere mob of chieftains who live by rapine, and boast as the Hirlas-horn passes from hand to hand through the hall that "they take and give no quarter." "Tender-hearted, wise, witty, ingenious," he was "the great Cæsar" who was to gather beneath his sway the broken fragments of the Celtic race. Mysterious prophecies, the prophecies of Merlin the Wise which floated from lip to lip and were heard even along the Seine and the Rhine, came home again to nerve Wales to its last struggle with the stranger. Medrawd and Arthur, men whispered, would appear once more on earth to fight over again the fatal battle of Camlan in which the hero-king perished. The last conqueror of the Celtic race, Cadwallon, still lived to combat for his people. The supposed verses of Taliesin expressed the undying hope of a restoration of the Cymry. "In their hands shall be all the land from Brittany to Man: . . . a rumour shall arise that the Germans are moving out of Britain back again to their fatherland." Gathered up in the strange work of Geoffrey of Monmouth, these predictions had long been making a deep impression not on Wales only but on its conquerors. It was to meet the dreams of a yet living Arthur that the grave of the legendary hero-king at Glastonbury was found and visited by Henry the Second. But neither trick nor conquest could shake the firm faith of the Celt in the ultimate victory of his race. "Think you," said Henry to a Welsh chieftain who joined his host, "that your people of rebels can withstand my army?" "My people," replied the chieftain, "may be weakened by your might, and even

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in great part destroyed, but unless the wrath of God be on the side of its foe it will not perish utterly. Nor deem I that other race or other tongue will answer for this corner of the world before the Judge of all at the last day save this people and tongue of Wales." So ran the popular rime, "Their Lord they will praise, their speech they shall keep, their land they shall lose—except wild Wales."

Faith and prophecy seemed justified by the growing strength of the British people. The weakness and dissensions which characterized the reign of Henry the Third enabled Llewelyn ap Iorwerth to preserve a practical independence till the close of his life, when a fresh acknowledgement of the English supremacy was wrested from him by Archbishop Edmund. But the triumphs of his arms were renewed by Llewelyn the son of Gryffydd, who followed him in 1246. The raids of the new chieftain swept the border to the very gates of Chester, while his conquest of Glamorgan seemed to bind the whole people together in a power strong enough to meet any attack from the stranger. So pressing was the danger that it called the King's eldest son, Edward, to the field; but his first appearance in arms ended in a crushing defeat. The defeat however remained unavenged. Henry's dreams were of mightier enterprizes than the reduction of the Welsh. The Popes were still fighting their weary battle against the House of Hohenstaufen, and were offering its kingdom of Sicily, which they regarded as a forfeited fief of the Holy See, to any power that would aid them in the struggle. In 1254 it was offered to the King's second son, Edmund. With imbecile pride Henry accepted the offer, prepared to send an army across the Alps, and pledged England to repay the sums which the Pope was borrowing for the purposes of his war. In a Parliament at the opening of 1257 he demanded an aid and a tenth from the clergy. A fresh demand was made in 1258. But the patience of the realm was at last exhausted. Earl Simon had returned

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in 1253 from his government of Gascony, and the fruit of his meditations during the four years of his quiet stay at home, a quiet broken only by short embassies to France and Scotland which showed there was as yet no open quarrel with Henry, was seen in a league of the baronage and in their adoption of a new and startling policy. The past half century had shown both the strength and weakness of the Charter: its strength as a rallying-point for the baronage and a definite assertion of rights which the King could be made to acknowledge; its weakness in providing no means for the enforcement of its own stipulations. Henry had sworn again and again to observe the Charter and his oath was no sooner taken than it was unscrupulously broken. The barons had secured the freedom of the realm; the secret of their long patience during the reign of Henry lay in the difficulty of securing its right administration. It was this difficulty which Earl Simon was prepared to solve when action was forced on him by the stir of the realm. A great famine added to the sense of danger from Wales and from Scotland and to the irritation at the new demands from both Henry and Rome with which the year 1258 opened. It was to arrange for a campaign against Wales that Henry called a parliament in April. But the baronage appeared in arms with Gloucester and Leicester at their head. The King was forced to consent to the appointment of a committee of twenty-four to draw up terms for the reform of the state. The Twenty-four again met the Parliament at Oxford in June, and although half the committee consisted of royal ministers and favourites it was impossible to resist the tide of popular feeling. Hugh Bigod, one of the firmest adherents of the two Earls, was chosen as Justiciar. The claim to elect this great officer was in fact the leading point in the baronial policy. But further measures were needed to hold in check such arbitrary misgovernment as had prevailed during the past twenty years. By the "Provisions of Oxford" it was agreed that the Great Council

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should assemble thrice in the year, whether summoned by the King or no; and on each occasion "the Commonalty shall elect twelve honest men who shall come to the Parliaments, and at other times when occasion shall be when the King and his Council shall send for them, to treat of the wants of the King and of his kingdom. And the Commonalty shall hold as established that which these Twelve shall do." Three permanent committees of barons and prelates were named to carry out the work of reform and administration. The reform of the Church was left to the original Twenty-Four; a second Twenty-Four negotiated the financial aids; a Permanent Council of Fifteen advised the King in the ordinary work of Government. The complexity of such an arrangement was relieved by the fact that the members of each of these committees were in great part the same persons. The Justiciar, Chancellor, and the guardians of the King's castles swore to act only with the advice and assent of the Permanent Council, and the first two great officers, with the Treasurer, were to give account of their proceedings to it at the end of the year. Sheriffs were to be appointed for a single year only, no doubt by the Council, from among the chief tenants of the county, and no undue fees were to be exacted for the administration of justice in their court.

Government
of the
Barons.

A royal proclamation in the English tongue, the first in that tongue since the Conquest which has reached us, ordered the observance of these Provisions. The King was in fact helpless, and resistance came only from the foreign favourites, who refused to surrender the castles and honours which had been granted to them. But the Twenty-four were resolute in their action; and an armed demonstration of the barons drove the foreigners in flight over sea. The whole royal power was now in fact in the hands of the committees appointed by the Great Council. But the measures of the barons showed little of the wisdom and energy which the country had hoped for. In October

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1259 the knighthood complained that the barons had done nothing but seek their own advantage in the recent changes. This protest produced the Provisions of Westminster, which gave protection to tenants against their feudal lords, regulated legal procedure in the feudal courts, appointed four knights in each shire to watch the justice of the sheriffs, and made other temporary enactments for the furtherance of justice. But these Provisions brought little fruit, and a tendency to mere feudal privilege showed itself in an exemption of all nobles and prelates from attendance at the Sheriff's courts. Their foreign policy was more vigorous and successful. All further payment to Rome, whether secular or ecclesiastical, was prohibited. Formal notice was given to the Pope of England's withdrawal from the Sicilian enterprise, peace put an end to the incursions of the Welsh, and negotiations on the footing of a formal abandonment of the King's claim to Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poitou ended in October, 1259, in a peace with France.

This peace, the triumph of that English policy which had been struggling ever since the days of Hubert de Burgh with the Continental policy of Henry and his foreign advisers, was the work of the Earl of Leicester. The revolution had doubtless been mainly Simon's doing. In the summer of 1258, while the great change was going on, a thunder storm drove the King as he passed along the river to the house of the Bishop of Durham where the Earl was then sojourning. Simon bade Henry take shelter with him and have no fear of the storm. The King refused with petulant wit. "If I fear the thunder, I fear you, Sir Earl, more than all the thunder in the world." But Simon had probably small faith in the cumbrous system of government which the Barons devised, and it was with reluctance that he was brought to swear to the Provisions of Oxford which embodied it. With their home government he had little to do, for from the autumn of 1258 to that of 1259 he was chiefly busied in negotiation in France.

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*The
Counter
Revolution.*

Earl Simon almost alone remained unshaken. But his growing influence was seen in the appointment of his supporter, Hugh Despenser, as Justiciar in Bigod's place, while his strength was doubled by the accession of the King's son Edward to his side. In the moment of the revolution Edward had vehemently supported the party of the foreigners. But he had sworn to observe the Provisions, and the fidelity to his pledge which remained throughout his life the chief note of his temper at once showed itself. Like Simon he protested against the faithlessness of the barons in the carrying out of their reforms, and it was his strenuous support of the petition of the knighthood that brought about the additional Provisions of 1259. He had been brought up with Earl Simon's sons, and with the Earl

himself his relations remained friendly even at the later time of their fatal hostilities. But as yet he seems to have had no distrust of Simon's purposes or policy. His adhesion to the Earl recalled Henry from France; and the King was at once joined by Gloucester in London while Edward and Simon remained without the walls. But the love of father and son proved too strong to bear political severance, and Edward's reconciliation foiled the Earl's plans. He withdrew to the Welsh border, where fresh troubles were breaking out, while Henry prepared to deal his final blow at the government which, tottering as it was, still held him in check. Rome had resented the measures which had put an end to her extortions, and it was to Rome that Henry looked for a formal absolution from his oath to observe the Provisions. In June 1261 he produced a Bull annulling the Provisions and freeing him from his oath in a Parliament at Winchester. The suddenness of the blow forbade open protest and Henry quickly followed up his victory. Hugh Bigod, who had surrendered the Tower and Dover in the spring, surrendered the other castles he held in the autumn. Hugh Despenser was deposed from the Justiciarship and a royalist, Philip Basset, appointed in his place.

The news of this counter-revolution reunited for a moment the barons. Gloucester joined Earl Simon in calling an autumn Parliament at St. Alban's, and in summoning to it three knights from every shire south of Trent. But the union was a brief one. Gloucester consented to refer the quarrel with the King to arbitration and the Earl of Leicester withdrew in August to France. He saw that for the while there was no means of withstanding Henry, even in his open defiance of the Provisions. Foreign soldiers were brought into the land; the King won back again the appointment of sheriffs. For eighteen months of this new rule Simon could do nothing but wait. But his long absence lulled the old jealousies against him. The confusion of the realm and a fresh outbreak of troubles

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in Wales renewed the disgust at Henry's government, while his unswerving faithfulness to the Provisions fixed the eyes of all Englishmen upon the Earl as their natural leader. The death of Gloucester in the summer of 1262 removed the one barrier to action; and in the spring of 1263 Simon landed again in England as the unquestioned head of the baronial party. What immediately forced him to action was a march of Edward with a body of foreign troops against Llewelyn, who was probably by this time in communication if not in actual alliance with the Earl. The chief opponents of Llewelyn among the Marcher Lords were ardent supporters of Henry's misgovernment, and when a common hostility drew the Prince and Earl together, the constitutional position of Llewelyn as an English noble gave formal justification for co-operation with him. At Whitsuntide the barons met Simon at Oxford and finally summoned Henry to observe the Provisions. His refusal was met by an appeal to arms. Throughout the country the younger nobles flocked to Simon's standard, and the young Earl of Gloucester, Gilbert of Clare, became his warmest supporter. His rapid movements foiled all opposition. While Henry vainly strove to raise money and men, Simon swept the Welsh border, marched through Reading on Dover, and finally appeared before London.

Mise of
Amiens.

The Earl's triumph was complete. Edward after a brief attempt at resistance was forced to surrender Windsor and disband his foreign troops. The rising of London in the cause of the barons left Henry helpless. But at the moment of triumph the Earl saw himself anew forsaken. The bulk of the nobles again drew towards the King; only six of the twelve barons who had formed the patriot half of the committee of 1258, only four of the twelve representatives of the community at that date, were now with the Earl. The dread too of civil war gave strength to the cry for a compromise, and at the end of the year it was agreed that the strife should be left to the arbitration of

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the French King, Lewis the Ninth. But saint and just ruler as he was, the royal power was in the conception of Lewis a divine thing, which no human power could limit or fetter, and his decision, which was given in January 1264, annulled the whole of the Provisions. Only the Charters granted before the Provisions were to be observed. The appointment and removal of all officers of state was to be wholly with the King, and he was suffered to call aliens to his councils if he would. The Mise of Amiens was at once confirmed by the Pope, and crushing blow as it was, the barons felt themselves bound by the award. It was only the exclusion of aliens—a point which they had not purposed to submit to arbitration—which they refused to concede. Luckily Henry was as inflexible on this point as on the rest, and the mutual distrust prevented any real accommodation.

But Henry had to reckon on more than the baronage. Deserted as he was by the greater nobles, Simon was far from standing alone. Throughout the recent struggle the new city governments of the craft-gilds, which were known by the name of "Communes," had shown an enthusiastic devotion to his cause. The Queen was stopped in her attempt to escape from the Tower by an angry mob, who drove her back with stones and foul words. When Henry attempted to surprise Leicester in his quarters at Southwark, the Londoners burst the gates which had been locked by the richer burghers against him, and rescued him by a welcome into the city. The clergy and the universities went in sympathy with the towns, and in spite of the taunts of the royalists, who accused him of seeking allies against the nobility in the common people, the popular enthusiasm gave a strength to the Earl which sustained him even in this darkest hour of the struggle. He at once resolved on resistance. The French award had luckily reserved the rights of Englishmen to the liberties they had enjoyed before the Provisions of Oxford, and it was easy for Simon to prove that the arbitrary power it gave to the

Battle of
Leves.

CHAP. III. Crown was as contrary to the Charter as to the Provisions themselves. London was the first to reject the decision; in March 1264 its citizens mustered at the call of the town-bell at Saint Paul's, seized the royal officials, and plundered the royal parks. But an army had already mustered in great force at the King's summons, while Leicester found himself deserted by the bulk of the baronage. Every day brought news of ill. A detachment from Scotland joined Henry's forces. The younger De Montfort was taken prisoner. Northampton was captured, the King raised the siege of Rochester, and a rapid march of Earl Simon's only saved London itself from a surprise by Edward. But betrayed as he was, the Earl remained firm to the cause. He would fight to the end, he said, even were he and his sons left to fight alone. With an army reinforced by 15,000 Londoners, he marched in May to the relief of the Cinque Ports which were now threatened by the King. Even on the march he was forsaken by many of the nobles who followed him. Halting at Fletching in Sussex, a few miles from Lewes, where the royal army was encamped, Earl Simon with the young Earl of Gloucester offered the King compensation for all damage if he would observe the Provisions. Henry's answer was one of defiance, and though numbers were against him, the Earl resolved on battle. His skill as a soldier reversed the advantages of the ground; marching at dawn on the 14th of May he seized the heights eastward of the town and moved down these slopes to an attack. His men with white crosses on back and breast knelt in prayer before the battle opened, and all but reached the town before their approach was perceived. Edward however opened the fight by a furious charge which broke the Londoners on Leicester's left. In the bitterness of his hatred for the insult to his mother he pursued them for four miles, slaughtering three thousand men. But he returned to find the battle lost. Crowded in the narrow space between the heights and the river Ouse, a space broken by marshes and

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by the long street of the town, the royalist centre and left were crushed by Earl Simon. The Earl of Cornwall, now King of the Romans, who, as the mocking song of the victors ran, "makede him a castel of a mulne post" ("he weened that the mill-sails were mangonels" goes on the sarcastic verse), was taken prisoner, and Henry himself captured. Edward cut his way into the Priory only to join in his father's surrender.

The victory of Lewes placed Earl Simon at the head of the state. "Now England breathes in the hope of liberty," sang a poet of the time; "the English were despised like dogs, but now they have lifted up their head and their foes are vanquished." But the moderation of the terms agreed upon in the Mise of Lewes, a convention between the King and his captors, shows Simon's sense of the difficulties of his position. The question of the Provisions was again to be submitted to arbitration; and a parliament in June, to which four knights were summoned from every county, placed the administration till this arbitration was complete in the hands of a new council of nine to be nominated by the Earls of Leicester and Gloucester and the patriotic Bishop of Chichester. Responsibility to the community was provided for by the declaration of a right in the body of barons and prelates to remove either of the Three Electors, who in turn could displace or appoint the members of the Council. Such a constitution was of a different order from the cumbrous and oligarchical committees of 1258. But it had little time to work in. The plans for a fresh arbitration broke down. Lewis refused to review his decision, and all schemes for setting fresh judges between the King and his people were defeated by a formal condemnation of the barons' cause issued by the Pope. Triumphant as he was indeed Earl Simon's difficulties thickened every day. The Queen with Archbishop Boniface gathered an army in France for an invasion; Roger Mortimer with the border barons was still in arms and only held in check by Llewelyn. It was impossible

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Simon's
rule.

CHAP. III. to make binding terms with an imprisoned King, yet to release Henry without terms was to renew the war. The imprisonment too gave a shock to public feeling which thinned the Earl's ranks. In the new Parliament which he called at the opening of 1265 the weakness of the patriotic party among the baronage was shown in the fact that only twenty-three earls and barons could be found to sit beside the hundred and twenty ecclesiastics.

Summons of the Commons. But it was just this sense of his weakness which prompted the Earl to an act that has done more than any incident of this struggle to immortalize his name. Had the strife been simply a strife for power between the king and the baronage the victory of either would have been equally fatal in its results. The success of the one would have doomed England to a royal despotism, that of the other to a feudal aristocracy. Fortunately for our freedom the English baronage had been brought too low by the policy of the kings to be able to withstand the crown single-handed. From the first moment of the contest it had been forced to make its cause a national one. The summons of two knights from each county, elected in its county court, to a Parliament in 1254, even before the opening of the struggle, was a recognition of the political weight of the country gentry which was confirmed by the summons of four knights from every county to the Parliament assembled after the battle of Lewes. The Provisions of Oxford, in stipulating for attendance and counsel on the part of twelve delegates of the "commonalty," gave the first indication of a yet wider appeal to the people at large. But it was the weakness of his party among the baronage at this great crisis which drove Earl Simon to a constitutional change of mighty issue in our history. As before, he summoned two knights from every county. But he created a new force in English politics when he summoned to sit beside them two citizens from every borough. The attendance of delegates from the towns had long been usual in the county courts

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when any matter respecting their interests was in question; but it was the writ issued by Earl Simon that first summoned the merchant and the trader to sit beside the knight of the shire, the baron, and the bishop in the parliament of the realm.

It is only this great event however which enables us to understand the large and prescient nature of Earl Simon's designs. Hardly a few months had passed away since the victory of Lewes when the burghers took their seats at Westminster, yet his government was tottering to its fall. We know little of the Parliament's acts. It seems to have chosen Simon as Justiciar and to have provided for Edward's liberation, though he was still to live under surveillance at Hereford and to surrender his earldom of Chester to Simon, who was thus able to communicate with his Welsh allies. The Earl met the dangers from without with complete success. In September 1264 a general muster of the national forces on Barham Down and a contrary wind put an end to the projects of invasion entertained by the mercenaries whom the Queen had collected in Flanders; the threats of France died away into negotiations; the Papal Legate was forbidden to cross the Channel, and his bulls of excommunication were flung into the sea. But the difficulties at home grew more formidable every day. The restraint upon Henry and Edward jarred against the national feeling of loyalty, and estranged the mass of Englishmen who always side with the weak. Small as the patriotic party among the barons had been from the first, it grew smaller as dissensions broke over the spoils of victory. The Earl's justice and resolve to secure the public peace told heavily against him. John Giffard left him because he refused to allow him to exact ransom from a prisoner, contrary to the agreement made after Lewes. A greater danger opened when the young Earl of Gloucester, though enriched with the estates of the foreigners, held himself aloof from the Justiciar, and resented Leicester's prohibition of a tournament, his

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Simon's difficulties.

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naming the wardens of the royal castles by his own authority, his holding Edward's fortresses on the Welsh marches by his own garrisons.

Gloucester's later conduct proves the wisdom of Leicester's precautions. In the spring Parliament of 1265 he openly charged the Earl with violating the Mise of Lewes, with tyranny, and with aiming at the crown. Before its close he withdrew to his own lands in the west and secretly allied himself with Roger Mortimer and the Marcher barons. Earl Simon soon followed him to the west, taking with him the King and Edward. He moved along the Severn, securing its towns, advanced westward to Hereford, and was marching at the end of June along bad roads into the heart of South Wales to attack the fortresses of Earl Gilbert in Glamorgan when Edward suddenly made his escape from Hereford and joined Gloucester at Ludlow. The moment had been skilfully chosen, and Edward showed a rare ability in the movements by which he took advantage of the Earl's position. Moving rapidly along the Severn he seized Gloucester and the bridges across the river, destroyed the ships by which Leicester strove to escape across the Channel to Bristol, and cut him off altogether from England. By this movement too he placed himself between the Earl and his son Simon, who was advancing from the east to his father's relief. Turning rapidly on this second force Edward surprized it at Kenilworth and drove it with heavy loss within the walls of the castle. But the success was more than compensated by the opportunity which his absence gave to the Earl of breaking the line of the Severn. Taken by surprise and isolated as he was, Simon had been forced to seek for aid and troops in an avowed alliance with Llewelyn, and it was with Welsh reinforcements that he turned to the east. But the seizure of his ships and of the bridges of the Severn held him a prisoner in Edward's grasp, and a fierce attack drove him back, with broken and starving forces, into the Welsh hills. In utter despair he struck north-

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ward to Hereford; but the absence of Edward now enabled him on the 2nd of August to throw his troops in boats across the Severn below Worcester. The news drew Edward quickly back in a fruitless counter-march to the river, for the Earl had already reached Evesham by a long night march on the morning of the 4th, while his son, relieved in turn by Edward's counter-march, had pushed in the same night to the little town of Alcester. The two armies were now but some ten miles apart, and their junction seemed secured. But both were spent with long marching, and while the Earl, listening reluctantly to the request of the King who accompanied him, halted at Evesham for mass and dinner, the army of the younger Simon halted for the same purpose at Alcester.

"Those two dinners doleful were, alas!" sings Robert of Gloucester; for through the same memorable night Edward was hurrying back from the Severn by country cross-lanes to seize the fatal gap that lay between them. As morning broke his army lay across the road that led northward from Evesham to Alcester. Evesham lies in a loop of the river Avon where it bends to the south; and a height on which Edward ranged his troops closed the one outlet from it save across the river. But a force had been thrown over the river under Mortimer to seize the bridges, and all retreat was thus finally cut off. The approach of Edward's army called Simon to the front, and for the moment he took it for his son's. Though the hope soon died away a touch of soldierly pride moved him as he recognized in the orderly advance of his enemies a proof of his own training. "By the arm of St. James," he cried, "they come on in wise fashion, but it was from me that they learnt it." A glance however satisfied him of the hopelessness of a struggle; it was impossible for a handful of horsemen with a mob of half-armed Welshmen to resist the disciplined knighthood of the royal army. "Let us commend our souls to God," Simon said to the little group around him, "for our bodies are the foe's." He bade

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of
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Hugh Despenser and the rest of his comrades fly from the field. "If he died," was the noble answer, "they had no will to live." In three hours the butchery was over. The Welsh fled at the first onset like sheep, and were cut ruthlessly down in the cornfields and gardens where they sought refuge. The little group of knights around Simon fought desperately, falling one by one till the Earl was left alone. So terrible were his sword-strokes that he had all but gained the hill top when a lance thrust brought his horse to the ground, but Simon still rejected the summons to yield till a blow from behind felled him mortally wounded to the ground. Then with a last cry of "It is God's grace" the soul of the great patriot passed away.

The
Royalist
reaction.

The triumphant blare of trumpets which welcomed the rescued King into Evesham, "his men weeping for joy," rang out in bitter contrast to the mourning of the realm. It sounded like the announcement of a reign of terror. The rights and laws for which men had toiled and fought so long seemed to have been swept away in an hour. Every town which had supported Earl Simon was held to be at the King's mercy, its franchises to be forfeited. The Charter of Lynn was annulled; London was marked out as the special object of Henry's vengeance, and the farms and merchandize of its citizens were seized as first-fruits of its plunder. The darkness which on that fatal morning hid their books from the monks of Evesham as they sang in choir was but a presage of the gloom which fell on the religious houses. From Ramsey, from Evesham, from St. Alban's rose the same cry of havoc and rapine. But the plunder of monk and burgess was little to the vast sentence of confiscation which the mere fact of rebellion was held to have passed on all the adherents of Earl Simon. To "disinherit" these of their lands was to confiscate half the estates of the landed gentry of England; but the hotter royalists declared them disinherited, and Henry was quick to lavish their lands away on favourites and foreigners. The very chroniclers of their party recall the

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pillage with shame. But all thought of resistance lay hushed in a general terror. Even the younger Simon "saw no other rede" than to release his prisoners. His army, after finishing its meal, was again on its march to join the Earl when the news of his defeat met it, heralded by a strange darkness that, rising suddenly in the north-west and following as it were on Edward's track, served to shroud the mutilations and horrors of the battle-field. The news was soon fatally confirmed. Simon himself could see from afar his father's head borne off on a spear-point to be mocked at Wigmore. But the pursuit streamed away southward and westward through the streets of Tewkesbury, heaped with corpses of the panic-struck Welshmen whom the townsmen slaughtered without pity; and there was no attack as the little force fell back through the darkness and big thunder-drops in despair upon Kenilworth. "I may hang up my axe," are the bitter words which a poet attributes to their leader, "for feebly have I gone;" and once within the castle he gave way to a wild sorrow, day after day tasting neither meat nor drink.

Edward.

He was roused into action again by news of the shameful indignities which the Marcher-lords had offered to the body of the great Earl before whom they had trembled so long. The knights around him broke out at the tidings in a passionate burst of fury, and clamoured for the blood of Richard of Cornwall and his son, who were prisoners in the castle. But Simon had enough nobleness left to interpose. "To God and him alone was it owing" Richard owned afterwards "that I was snatched from death." The captives were not only saved, but set free. A Parliament had been called at Winchester at the opening of September, and its mere assembly promised an end to the reign of utter lawlessness. A powerful party, too, was known to exist in the royal camp which, hostile as it had shown itself to Earl Simon, shared his love for English liberties, and the liberation of Richard was sure to aid its efforts. At the

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head of this party stood the young Earl of Gloucester, Gilbert of Clare, to whose action above all the Earl's overthrow was due. And with Gilbert stood Edward himself. The passion for law, the instinct of good government, which were to make his reign so memorable in our history, had declared themselves from the first. He had sided with the barons at the outset of their struggle with Henry; he had striven to keep his father true to the Provisions of Oxford. It was only when the figure of Earl Simon seemed to tower above that of Henry himself, when the Crown seemed falling into bondage, that Edward passed to the royal side; and now that the danger which he dreaded was over he returned to his older attitude. In the first flush of victory, while the doom of Simon was as yet unknown, Edward had stood alone in desiring his captivity against the cry of the Marcher-lords for his blood. When all was done he wept over the corpse of his cotson and playfellow, Henry de Montfort, and followed the Earl's body to the tomb. But great as was Edward's position after the victory of Evesham, his moderate counsels were as yet of little avail. His efforts in fact were met by those of Henry's second son, Edmund, who had received the lands and earldom of Earl Simon, and whom the dread of any restoration of the house of De Montfort set at the head of the ultra-royalists. Nor was any hope of moderation to be found in the Parliament which met in September 1265. It met in the usual temper of a restoration-Parliament to legalize the outrages of the previous month. The prisoners who had been released from the dungeons of the barons poured into Winchester to add fresh violence to the demands of the Marchers. The wives of the captive loyalists and the widows of the slain were summoned to give fresh impulse to the reaction. Their place of meeting added fuel to the fiery passions of the throng, for Winchester was fresh from its pillage by the younger Simon on his way to Kenilworth, and its stubborn loyalty must have been fanned into a flame by the losses it had endured. In such

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an assembly no voice of moderation could find a hearing. The four bishops who favoured the national cause, the bishops of London and Lincoln, of Worcester and Chichester, were excluded from it, and the heads of the religious houses were summoned for the mere purpose of extortion. Its measures were but a confirmation of the violence which had been wrought. All grants made during the King's "captivity" were revoked. The house of De Montfort was banished from the realm. The charter of London was annulled. The adherents of Earl Simon were disinherited and seizin of their lands was given to the King.

Henry at once appointed commissioners to survey and take possession of his spoil while he moved to Windsor to triumph in the humiliation of London. Its mayor and forty of its chief citizens waited in the castle yard only to be thrown into prison in spite of a safe-conduct, and Henry entered his capital in triumph as into an enemy's city. The surrender of Dover came to fill his cup of joy, for Richard and Amaury of Montfort had sailed with the Earl's treasure to enlist foreign mercenaries, and it was by this port that their force was destined to land. But a rising of the prisoners detained there compelled its surrender in October, and the success of the royalists seemed complete. In reality their difficulties were but beginning. Their triumph over Earl Simon had been a triumph over the religious sentiment of the time, and religion avenged itself in its own way. Everywhere the Earl's death was looked upon as a martyrdom; and monk and friar united in praying for the souls of the men who fell at Evesham as for soldiers of Christ. It was soon whispered that Heaven was attesting the sanctity of De Montfort by miracles at his tomb. How great was the effect of this belief was seen in the efforts of King and Pope to suppress the miracles, and in their continuance not only through the reign of Edward the First but even in the days of his successor. But its immediate result was a sudden revival

*Simon's
Miracles.*

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of hope. "Sighs are changed into songs of praise," breaks out a monk of the time, "and the greatness of our former joy has come to life again!" Nor was it in miracles alone that the "faithful," as they proudly styled themselves, began to look for relief "from the oppression of the malignants." A monk of St. Alban's who was penning a eulogy of Earl Simon in the midst of this uproar saw the rise of a new spirit of resistance in the streets of the little town. In dread of war it was guarded and strongly closed with bolts and bars, and refused entrance to all strangers, and above all to horsemen, who wished to pass through. The Constable of Hertford, an old foe of the townsmen, boasted that spite of bolts and bars he would enter the place and carry off four of the best villeins captive. He contrived to make his way in; but as he loitered idly about a butcher who passed by heard him ask his men how the wind stood. The butcher guessed his design to burn the town, and felled him to the ground. The blow roused the townsmen. They secured the Constable and his followers, struck off their heads, and fixed them at the four corners of the borough.

The
Younger
Simon.

The popular reaction gave fresh heart to the younger Simon. Quitting Kenilworth, he joined in November John D'Eyvill and Baldwin Wake in the Isle of Axholme where the Disinherited were gathering in arms. So fast did horse and foot flow in to him that Edward himself hurried into Lincolnshire to meet this new danger. He saw that the old strife was just breaking out again. The garrison of Kenilworth scoured the country; the men of the Cinque Ports, putting wives and children on board their barks, swept the Channel and harried the coasts; while Llewelyn, who had brought about the dissolution of Parliament by a raid upon Chester, butchered the forces sent against him and was master of the border. The one thing needed to link the forces of resistance together was a head, and such a head the appearance of Simon at Axholme seemed to promise. But Edward was resolute

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in his plan of conciliation. Arriving before the camp at the close of 1265, he at once entered into negotiations with his cousin, and prevailed on him to quit the island and appear before the King. Richard of Cornwall welcomed Simon at the court, he presented him to Henry as the saviour of his life, and on his promise to surrender Kenilworth Henry gave him the kiss of peace. In spite of the opposition of Roger Mortimer and the Marcher-lords success seemed to be crowning this bold stroke of the peace party when the Earl of Gloucester interposed. Desirous as he was of peace, the blood of De Montfort lay between him and the Earl's sons, and the safety of the one lay in the ruin of the other. In the face of this danger Earl Gilbert threw his weight into the scale of the ultra-royalists, and peace became impossible. The question of restitution was shelved by a reference to arbitrators; and Simon, detained in spite of a safe-conduct, moved in Henry's train at Christmas to witness the surrender of Kenilworth which had been stipulated as the price of his full reconciliation with the King. But hot blood was now stirred again on both sides. The garrison replied to the royal summons by a refusal to surrender. They had received ward of the castle, they said, not from Simon but from the Countess, and to none but her would they give it up. The refusal was not likely to make Simon's position an easier one. On his return to London the award of the arbitrators bound him to quit the realm and not to return save with the assent of King and baronage when all were at peace. He remained for a while in free custody at London; but warnings that he was doomed to life-long imprisonment drove him to flight, and he finally sought a refuge over sea.

His escape set England again on fire. Llewelyn wasted the border; the Cinque Ports held the sea; the garrison of Kenilworth pushed their raids as far as Oxford; Baldwin Wake with a band of the Disinherited threw himself into the woods and harried the eastern counties;

Ban of
Kenil-
worth.

CHAP. III. Sir Adam Gurdou, a knight of gigantic size and renowned prowess, wasted with a smaller party the shires of the south. In almost every county bands of outlaws were seeking a livelihood in rapine and devastation, while the royal treasury stood empty and the enormous fine imposed upon London had been swept into the coffers of French usurers. But a stronger hand than the King's was now at the head of affairs, and Edward met his assailants with untiring energy. King Richard's son, Henry of Almaine, was sent with a large force to the north; Mortimer hurried to hold the Welsh border; Edmund was despatched to Warwick to hold Kenilworth in check while Edward himself marched at the opening of March to the south. The Berkshire woods were soon cleared, and at Whitsuntide Edward succeeded in dispersing Adam Gurdou's band and in capturing its renowned leader in single combat. The last blow was already given to the rising in the north, where Henry of Almaine surprized the Disinherited at Chesterfield and took their leader, the Earl of Derby, in his bed. Though Edmund had done little but hold the Kenilworth knights in check, the submission of the rest of the country now enabled the royal army to besiege it in force. But the King was penniless, and the Parliament which he called to replenish his treasury in August showed the resolve of the nation that the strife should cease. They would first establish peace, if peace were possible, they said, and then answer the King's demand. Twelve commissioners, with Earl Gilbert at their head, were appointed on Henry's assent to arrange terms of reconciliation. They at once decided that none should be utterly disinherited for their part in the troubles, but that liberty of redemption should be left open to all. Furious at the prospect of being forced to disgorge their spoil, Mortimer and the ultra-royalists broke out in mad threats of violence, even against the life of the Papal legate who had pressed for the reconciliation. But the power of the ultra-royalists was over. The general resolve was not to be shaken by

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the clamour of a faction, and Mortimer's rout at Brecknock by Llewelyn, the one defeat that chequered the tide of success, had damaged that leader's influence. Backed by Edward and Earl Gilbert, the legate met their opposition with a threat of excommunication, and Mortimer withdrew sullenly from the camp. Fresh trouble in the country and the seizure of the Isle of Ely by a band of the Disinherited quickened the labours of the Twelve. At the close of September they pronounced their award, restoring their lands to all who made submission on a graduated scale of redemption, promising indemnity for all wrongs done during the troubles, and leaving the restoration of the house of De Montfort to the royal will. But to these provisions were added an emphatic demand that "the King fully keep and observe those liberties of the Church, charters of liberties, and forest charters, which he is expressly and by his own mouth bound to preserve and keep." "Let the King," they add, "establish on a lasting foundation those concessions which he has hitherto made of his own will and not on compulsion, and those needful ordinances which have been devised by his subjects and by his own good pleasure."

With this Award the struggle came to an end. The garrison of Kenilworth held out indeed till November, and the full benefit of the Ban was only secured when Earl Gilbert in the opening of the following year suddenly appeared in arms and occupied London. But the Earl was satisfied, the Disinherited were at last driven from Ely, and Llewelyn was brought to submission by the appearance of an army at Shrewsbury. All was over by the close of 1267. His father's age and weakness, his own brilliant military successes, left Edward practically in possession of the royal power; and his influence at once made itself felt. There was no attempt to return to the misrule of Henry's reign, to his projects of continental aggrandizement or internal despotism. The constitutional system of government for which the Barons had fought

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Close of
the
Struggle.

CHAP. III. was finally adopted by the Crown, and the Parliament of Marlborough which assembled in November 1267 renewed the provisions by which the baronage had remedied the chief abuses of the time in their Provisions of Oxford and Westminster. The appointment of all officers of state indeed was jealously reserved to the crown. But the royal expenditure was brought within bounds. Taxation was only imposed with the assent of the Great Council. So utterly was the land at rest that Edward felt himself free to take the cross in 1268 and to join the Crusade which was being undertaken by St. Lewis of France. He reached Tunis only to find Lewis dead and his enterprize a failure, wintered in Sicily, made his way to Acre in the spring of 1271, and spent more than a year in exploits which want of force prevented from growing into a serious campaign. He was already on his way home when the death of Henry the Third in November 1272 called him to the throne.

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CHAPTER IV.

EDWARD THE FIRST.

1272—1307.

In his own day and among his own subjects Edward the First was the object of an almost boundless admiration. He was in the truest sense a national King. At the moment when the last trace of foreign conquest passed away, when the descendants of those who won and those who lost at Senlac blended for ever into an English people, England saw in her ruler no stranger but an Englishman. The national tradition returned in more than the golden hair or the English name which linked him to our earlier Kings. Edward's very temper was English to the core. In good as in evil he stands out as the typical representative of the race he ruled, like them wilful and imperious, tenacious of his rights, indomitable in his pride, dogged, stubborn, slow of apprehension, narrow in sympathy, but like them, too, just in the main, unselfish, laborious, conscientious, haughtily observant of truth and self-respect, temperate, reverent of duty, religious. It is this oneness with the character of his people which parts the temper of Edward from what had till now been the temper of his house. He inherited indeed from the Angevins their fierce and passionate wrath; his punishments, when he punished in anger, were without pity; and a priest who ventured at a moment of storm into his presence with a remonstrance dropped dead from sheer fright at his feet. But his nature had nothing of the hard

*Edward's
Temper.*

CHAP. IV. selfishness, the vindictive obstinacy which had so long characterized the house of Anjou. His wrath passed as quickly as it gathered; and for the most part his conduct was that of an impulsive, generous man, trustful, averse from cruelty, prone to forgive. "No man ever asked mercy of me," he said in his old age, "and was refused." The rough soldierly nobleness of his nature broke out in incidents like that at Falkirk where he lay on the bare ground among his men, or in his refusal during a Welsh campaign to drink of the one cask of wine which had been saved from marauders. "It is I who have brought you into this strait," he said to his thirsty fellow-soldiers, "and I will have no advantage of you in meat or drink." Beneath the stern imperiousness of his outer bearing lay in fact a strange tenderness and sensitiveness to affection. Every subject throughout his realm was drawn closer to the King who wept bitterly at the news of his father's death though it gave him a crown, whose fiercest burst of vengeance was called out by an insult to his mother, whose crosses rose as memorials of his love and sorrow at every spot where his wife's bier rested. "I loved her tenderly in her lifetime," wrote Edward to Eleanor's friend, the Abbot of Clugny; "I do not cease to love her now she is dead." And as it was with mother and wife, so it was with his people at large. All the self-concentrated isolation of the foreign Kings disappeared in Edward. He was the first English ruler since the Conquest who loved his people with a personal love and craved for their love back again. To his trust in them we owe our Parliament, to his care for them the great statutes which stand in the forefront of our laws. Even in his struggles with her England understood a temper which was so perfectly her own, and the quarrels between King and people during his reign are quarrels where, doggedly as they fought, neither disputant doubted for a moment the worth or affection of the other. Few scenes in our history are more touching than a scene during the long contest over the Charter, when Edward

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the First.
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stood face to face with his people in Westminster Hall and with a sudden burst of tears owned himself frankly in the wrong.

But it was just this sensitiveness, this openness to outer impressions and outer influences, that led to the strange contradictions which meet us in Edward's career. His reign was a time in which a foreign influence told strongly on our manners, our literature, our national spirit, for the sudden rise of France into a compact and organized monarchy was now making its influence dominant in Western Europe. The "chivalry" so familiar to us in the pages of Froissart, that picturesque mimicry of high sentiment, of heroism, love, and courtesy before which all depth and reality of nobleness disappeared to make room for the coarsest profligacy, the narrowest caste-spirit, and a brutal indifference to human suffering, was specially of French creation. There was a nobleness in Edward's nature from which the baser influences of this chivalry fell away. His life was pure, his piety, save when it stooped to the superstition of the time, manly and sincere, while his high sense of duty saved him from the frivolous self-indulgence of his successors. But he was far from being wholly free from the taint of his age. His passionate desire was to be a model of the fashionable chivalry of his day. His frame was that of a born soldier—tall, deep-chested, long of limb, capable alike of endurance or action, and he shared to the full his people's love of venture and hard fighting. When he encountered Adam Gurdon after Evesham he forced him single-handed to beg for mercy. At the opening of his reign he saved his life by sheer fighting in a tournament at Chalon. It was this love of adventure which lent itself to the frivolous unreality of the new chivalry. His fame as a general seemed a small thing to Edward when compared with his fame as a knight. At his "Round Table of Kenilworth" a hundred lords and ladies, "clad all in silk," renewed the faded glories of Arthur's Court. The false air of romance which

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CHAP. IV. was soon to turn the gravest political resolutions into outbursts of sentimental feeling appeared in his "Vow of the Swan," when rising at the royal board he swore on the dish before him to avenge on Scotland the murder of Comyn. Chivalry exerted on him a yet more fatal influence in its narrowing of his sympathy to the noble class and in its exclusion of the peasant and the craftsman from all claim to pity. "Knight without reproach" as he was, he looked calmly on at the massacre of the burghers of Berwick, and saw in William Wallace nothing but a common robber.

*Influence
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Legality.*

The French notion of chivalry had hardly more power over Edward's mind than the French conception of kingship, feudality, and law. The rise of a lawyer class was everywhere hardening customary into written rights, allegiance into subjection, loose ties such as commendation into a definite vassalage. But it was specially through French influence, the influence of St. Lewis and his successors, that the imperial theories of the Roman Law were brought to bear upon this natural tendency of the time. When the "sacred majesty" of the Cæsars was transferred by a legal fiction to the royal head of a feudal baronage every constitutional relation was changed. The "defiance" by which a vassal renounced service to his lord became treason, his after resistance "sacrilege." That Edward could appreciate what was sound and noble in the legal spirit around him was shown in his reforms of our judicature and our Parliament; but there was something as congenial to his mind in its definiteness, its rigidity, its narrow technicalities. He was never wilfully unjust, but he was too often captious in his justice, fond of legal chicanery, prompt to take advantage of the letter of the law. The high conception of royalty which he borrowed from St. Lewis united with this legal turn of mind in the worst acts of his reign. Of rights or liberties unregistered in charter or roll Edward would know nothing, while his own good sense was overpowered by the majesty of his

crown. It was incredible to him that Scotland should revolt against a legal bargain which made her national independence conditional on the terms extorted from a claimant of her throne; nor could he view in any other light but as treason the resistance of his own baronage to an arbitrary taxation which their fathers had borne.

It is in the anomalies of such a character as this, in its strange mingling of justice and wrong-doing, of grandeur and littleness, that we must look for any fair explanation of much that has since been bitterly blamed in Edward's conduct and policy. But what none of these anomalies can hide from us is the height of moral temper which shows itself in the tenor of his rule. Edward was every inch a king; but his notion of kingship was a lofty and a noble one. He loved power; he believed in his sovereign rights and clung to them with a stubborn tenacity. But his main end in clinging to them was the welfare of his people. Nothing better proves the self-command which he drew from the purpose he set before him than his freedom from the common sin of great rulers—the lust of military glory. He was the first of our kings since William the Conqueror who combined military genius with political capacity; but of the warrior's temper, of the temper that finds delight in war, he had little or none. His freedom from it was the more remarkable that Edward was a great soldier. His strategy in the campaign before Evesham marked him as a consummate general. Earl Simon was forced to admire the skill of his advance on the fatal field, and the operations by which he met the risings that followed it were a model of rapidity and military grasp. In his Welsh campaigns he was soon to show a tenacity and force of will which wrested victory out of the midst of defeat. He could head a furious charge of horse as at Lewes, or organize a commissariat which enabled him to move army after army across the harried Lowlands. In his old age he was quick to discover the value of the English archery and to employ it as a means of victory

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at Falkirk. But master as he was of the art of war, and forced from time to time to show his mastery in great campaigns, in no single instance was he the assailant. He fought only when he was forced to fight; and when fighting was over he turned back quietly to the work of administration and the making of laws.

War in fact was with Edward simply a means of carrying out the ends of statesmanship, and it was in the character of his statesmanship that his real greatness made itself felt. His policy was an English policy; he was firm to retain what was left of the French dominion of his race, but he abandoned from the first all dreams of recovering the wider dominions which his grandfather had lost. His mind was not on that side of the Channel, but on this. He concentrated his energies on the consolidation and good government of England itself. We can only fairly judge the annexation of Wales or his attempt to annex Scotland if we look on his efforts in either quarter as parts of the same scheme of national administration to which we owe his final establishment of our judicature, our legislation, our parliament. The character of his action was no doubt determined in great part by the general mood of his age, an age whose special task and aim seemed to be that of reducing to distinct form the principles which had sprung into a new and vigorous life during the age which preceded it. As the opening of the thirteenth century had been an age of founders, creators, discoverers, so its close was an age of lawyers, of rulers such as St. Lewis of France or Alfonzo the Wise of Castille, organizers, administrators, framers of laws and institutions. It was to this class that Edward himself belonged. He had little of creative genius, of political originality, but he possessed in a high degree the passion for order and good government, the faculty of organization, and a love of law which broke out even in the legal chicanery to which he sometimes stooped. In the judicial reforms to which so much of his attention was directed he showed himself, if not an "English

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Justinian," at any rate a clear-sighted and judicious man of business, developing, reforming, bringing into a shape which has borne the test of five centuries' experience the institutions of his predecessors. If the excellence of a statesman's work is to be measured by its duration and the faculty it has shown of adapting itself to the growth and development of a nation, then the work of Edward rises to the highest standard of excellence. Our law courts preserve to this very day the form which he gave them. Mighty as has been the growth of our Parliament, it has grown on the lines which he laid down. The great roll of English Statutes reaches back in unbroken series to the Statutes of Edward. The routine of the first Henry, the administrative changes which had been imposed on the nation by the clear head and imperious will of the second, were transformed under Edward into a political organization with carefully-defined limits, directed not by the King's will alone but by the political impulse of the people at large. His social legislation was based in the same fashion on principles which had already been brought into practical working by Henry the Second. It was no doubt in great measure owing to this practical sense of its financial and administrative value rather than to any foresight of its political importance that we owe Edward's organization of our Parliament. But if the institutions which we commonly associate with his name owe their origin to others, they owe their form and their perpetuity to him.

The King's English policy, like his English name, was in fact the sign of a new epoch. England was made. The long period of national formation had come practically to an end. With the reign of Edward begins the constitutional England in which we live. It is not that any chasm separates our history before it from our history after it as the chasm of the Revolution divides the history of France, for we have traced the rudiments of our constitution to the first moment of the English settlement in Britain. But it is with these as with our language. The

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tongue of Ælfred is the very tongue we speak, but in spite of its identity with modern English it has to be learned like the tongue of a stranger. On the other hand, the English of Chaucer is almost as intelligible as our own. In the first the historian and philologist can study the origin and development of our national speech, in the last a school-boy can enjoy the story of Troilus and Cressida or listen to the gay chat of the Canterbury Pilgrims. In precisely the same way a knowledge of our earliest laws is indispensable for the right understanding of later legislation, its origin and its development, while the principles of our Parliamentary system must necessarily be studied in the Meetings of Wise Men before the Conquest or the Great Council of barons after it. But the Parliaments which Edward gathered at the close of his reign are not merely illustrative of the history of later Parliaments, they are absolutely identical with those which still sit at St. Stephen's. At the close of his reign King, Lords, Commons, the Courts of Justice, the forms of public administration, the relations of Church and State, all local divisions and provincial jurisdictions, in great measure the framework of society itself, have taken the shape which they essentially retain. In a word the long struggle of the constitution for actual existence has come to an end. The contests which follow are not contests that tell, like those that preceded them, on the actual fabric of our institutions; they are simply stages in the rough discipline by which England has learned and is still learning how best to use and how wisely to develop the latent powers of its national life, how to adjust the balance of its social and political forces, how to adapt its constitutional forms to the varying conditions of the time.

*The
Earlier
Finance.*

The news of his father's death found Edward at Capua in the opening of 1273; but the quiet of his realm under a regency of which Roger Mortimer was the practical head left him free to move slowly homewards. Two of his acts while thus journeying through Italy show that his

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mind was already dwelling on the state of English finance and of English law. His visit to the Pope at Orvieto was with a view of gaining permission to levy from the clergy a tenth of their income for the three coming years, while he drew from Bologna its most eminent jurist, Francesco Accursi, to aid in the task of legal reform. At Paris he did homage to Philip the Third for his French possessions, and then turning southward he devoted a year to the ordering of Gascony. It was not till the summer of 1274 that the King reached England. But he had already planned the work he had to do, and the measures which he laid before the Parliament of 1275 were signs of the spirit in which he was to set about it. The First Statute of Westminster was rather a code than a statute. It contained no less than fifty-one clauses, and was an attempt to summarize a number of previous enactments contained in the Great Charter, the Provisions of Oxford, and the Statute of Marlborough, as well as to embody some of the administrative measures of Henry the Second and his son. But a more pressing need than that of a codification of the law was the need of a reorganization of finance. While the necessities of the Crown were growing with the widening of its range of administrative action, the revenues of the Crown admitted of no corresponding expansion. In the earliest times of our history the outgoings of the Crown were as small as its income. All local expenses, whether for justice or road-making or fortress-building, were paid by local funds; and the national "fyrd" served at its own cost in the field. The produce of a king's private estates with the provisions due to him from the public lands scattered over each county, whether gathered by the King himself as he moved over his realm, or as in later days fixed at a stated rate and collected by his sheriff, were sufficient to defray the mere expenses of the Court. The Danish wars gave the first shock to this simple system. To raise a ransom which freed the land from the invader, the first land-

CHAP. IV. tax, under the name of the Danegeld, was laid on every hide of ground; and to this national taxation the Norman kings added the feudal burthens of the new military estates created by the Conquest, reliefs paid on inheritance, profits of marriages and wardship, and the three feudal aids. But foreign warfare soon exhausted these means of revenue; the barons and bishops in their Great Council were called on at each emergency for a grant from their lands, and at each grant a corresponding demand was made by the King as a landlord on the towns, as lying for the most part in the royal demesne. The cessation of Danegeld under Henry the Second and his levy of scutage made little change in the general incidence of taxation: it still fell wholly on the land, for even the townsmen paid as holders of their tenements. But a new principle of taxation was disclosed in the tithe levied for a Crusade at the close of Henry's reign. Land was no longer the only source of wealth. The growth of national prosperity, of trade and commerce, was creating a mass of personal property which offered irresistible temptations to the Angevin financiers. The old revenue from landed property was restricted and lessened by usage and compositions. Scutage was only due for foreign campaigns: the feudal aids only on rare and stated occasions: and though the fines from the shire-courts grew with the growth of society the dues from the public lands were fixed and incapable of development. But no usage fettered the Crown in dealing with personal property, and its growth in value promised a growing revenue. From the close of Henry the Second's reign therefore this became the most common form of taxation. Grants of from a seventh to a thirtieth of moveables, household-property, and stock were demanded; and it was the necessity of procuring their assent to these demands which enabled the baronage through the reign of Henry the Third to bring a financial pressure to bear on the Crown.

Indirect Taxation. But in addition to these two forms of direct taxation indirect taxation also was coming more and more to the

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front. The right of the King to grant licences to bring goods into or to trade within the realm, a right springing from the need for his protection felt by the strangers who came there for purposes of traffic, laid the foundation of our taxes on imports. Those on exports were only a part of the general system of taxing personal property which we have already noticed. How tempting this source of revenue was proving we see from a provision of the Great Charter which forbids the levy of more than the ancient customs on merchants entering or leaving the realm. Commerce was in fact growing with the growing wealth of the people. The crowd of civil and ecclesiastical buildings which date from this period shows the prosperity of the country. Christian architecture reached its highest beauty in the opening of Edward's reign; a reign marked by the completion of the abbey church of Westminster and of the cathedral church at Salisbury. An English noble was proud to be styled "an incomparable builder," while some traces of the art which was rising into life across the Alps flowed in, it may be, with the Italian ecclesiastics whom the Papacy forced on the English Church. The shrine of the Confessor at Westminster, the mosaic pavement beside the altar of the abbey, the paintings on the walls of its chapter-house remind us of the schools which were springing up under Giotto and the Pisans. But the wealth which this art progress shows drew trade to English shores. England was as yet simply an agricultural country. Gascony sent her wines; her linens were furnished by the looms of Ghent and Liège; Genoese vessels brought to her fairs the silks, the velvets, the glass of Italy. In the barks of the Hanse merchants came fur and amber from the Baltic, herrings, pitch, timber, and naval stores from the countries of the north. Spain sent us iron and war-horses. Milan sent armour. The great Venetian merchant-galleys touched the southern coasts and left in our ports the dates of Egypt, the figs and currants

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CHAP. IV. of Greece, the silk of Sicily, the sugar of Cyprus and
 Edward the First. Crete, the spices of the Eastern seas. Capital too came
 1272-1307. from abroad. The bankers of Florence and Lucca were
 busy with loans to the court or vast contracts with the
 wool-growers. The bankers of Cahors had already dealt
 a death-blow to the usury of the Jew. Against all this
 England had few exports to set. The lead supplied by the
 mines of Derbyshire, the salt of the Worcestershire springs,
 the iron of the Weald, were almost wholly consumed
 at home. The one metal export of any worth was that of
 tin from the tin-mines of Cornwall. But the production
 of wool was fast becoming a main element of the nation's
 wealth. Flanders, the great manufacturing country of the
 time, lay fronting our eastern coast; and with this market
 close at hand the pastures of England found more and
 more profit in the supply of wool. The Cistercian order
 which possessed vast ranges of moorland in Yorkshire
 became famous as wool-growers; and their wool had been
 seized for Richard's ransom. The Florentine merchants
 were developing this trade by their immense contracts; we
 find a single company of merchants contracting for the
 purchase of the Cistercian wool throughout the year. It
 was after counsel with the Italian bankers that Edward
 devised his scheme for drawing a permanent revenue from
 this source. In the Parliament of 1275 he obtained the
 grant of half a mark, or six shillings and eightpence, on
 each sack of wool exported; and this grant, a grant
 memorable as forming the first legal foundation of our
 customs-revenue, at once relieved the necessities of the
 Crown.

Welsh Campaign. The grant of the wool tax enabled Edward in fact to deal
 with the great difficulty of his realm. The troubles of the
 Barons' war, the need which Earl Simon felt of Llewelyn's
 alliance to hold in check the Marcher-barons, had all but
 shaken off from Wales the last traces of dependence.
 Even at the close of the war the threat of an attack from
 the now united kingdom only forced Llewelyn to submit-

sion on a practical acknowledgement of his sovereignty.
 Although the title which Llewelyn ap Iorwerth claimed of
 Prince of North Wales was recognized by the English
 court in the earlier days of Henry the Third, it was with-
 drawn after 1229 and its claimant known only as Prince
 of Aberffraw. But the loftier title of Prince of Wales
 which Llewelyn ap Gryffydd assumed in 1256 was formally
 conceded to him in 1267, and his right to receive homage
 from the other nobles of his principality was formally
 sanctioned. Near however as he seemed to the final
 realization of his aims, Llewelyn was still a vassal of the
 English crown, and the accession of Edward to the throne
 was at once followed by the demand of homage. But the
 summons was fruitless; and the next two years were
 wasted in as fruitless negotiation. The kingdom however
 was now well in hand. The royal treasury was filled again,
 and in 1277 Edward marched on North Wales. The fabric
 of Welsh greatness fell at a single blow. The chieftains
 who had so lately sworn fealty to Llewelyn in the
 southern and central parts of the country deserted him
 to join his English enemies in their attack; an English
 fleet reduced Anglesea; and the Prince was cooped up in
 his mountain fastnesses and forced to throw himself on
 Edward's mercy. With characteristic moderation the
 conqueror contented himself with adding to the English
 dominions the coast-district as far as Conway and with
 providing that the title of Prince of Wales should cease
 at Llewelyn's death. A heavy fine which he had incurred
 by his refusal to do homage was remitted; and Eleanor, a
 daughter of Earl Simon of Montfort whom he had sought
 as his wife but who had been arrested on her way to him,
 was wedded to the Prince at Edward's court.

For four years all was quiet across the Welsh Marches,
 and Edward was able again to turn his attention to the
 work of internal reconstruction. It is probably to this
 time, certainly to the earlier years of his reign, that we
 may attribute his modification of our judicial system.

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Judicial
 Reforms

CHAP. IV. The King's Court was divided into three distinct tribunals, the Court of Exchequer which took cognizance of all causes in which the royal revenue was concerned; the Court of Common Pleas for suits between private persons; and the King's Bench, which had jurisdiction in all matters that affected the sovereign as well as in "pleas of the crown" or criminal causes expressly reserved for his decision. Each court was now provided with a distinct staff of judges. Of yet greater importance than this change, which was in effect but the completion of a process of severance that had long been going on, was the establishment of an equitable jurisdiction side by side with that of the common law. In his reform of 1178 Henry the Second broke up the older King's Court, which had till then served as the final Court of Appeal, by the severance of the purely legal judges who had been gradually added to it from the general body of his councillors. The judges thus severed from the Council retained the name and the ordinary jurisdiction of "the King's Court," but the mere fact of their severance changed in an essential way the character of the justice they dispensed. The King in Council wielded a power which was not only judicial but executive; his decisions though based upon custom were not fettered by it, they were the expressions of his will, and it was as his will that they were carried out by officers of the Crown. But the separate bench of judges had no longer this unlimited power at their command. They had not the King's right as representative of the community to make the law for the redress of a wrong. They professed simply to declare what the existing law was, even if it was insufficient for the full purpose of redress. The authority of their decision rested mainly on their adhesion to ancient custom or as it was styled the "common law" which had grown up in the past. They could enforce their decisions only by directions to an independent officer, the sheriff, and here again their right was soon rigidly bounded by set form and custom. These bonds in fact became tighter

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every day, for their decisions were now beginning to be reported, and the cases decided by one bench of judges became authorities for their successors. It is plain that such a state of things has the utmost value in many ways, whether in creating in men's minds that impersonal notion of a sovereign law which exercises its imaginative force on human action, or in furnishing by the accumulation and sacredness of precedents a barrier against the invasion of arbitrary power. But it threw a terrible obstacle in the way of the actual redress of wrong. The increasing complexity of human action as civilization advanced outstripped the efforts of the law. Sometimes ancient custom furnished no redress for a wrong which sprang from modern circumstances. Sometimes the very pedantry and inflexibility of the law itself became in individual cases the highest injustice.

It was the consciousness of this that made men cling even from the first moment of the independent existence of these courts to the judicial power which still remained inherent in the Crown itself. If his courts fell short in any matter the duty of the King to do justice to all still remained, and it was this obligation which was recognized in the provision of Henry the Second by which all cases in which his judges failed to do justice were reserved for the special cognizance of the royal Council itself. To this final jurisdiction of the King in Council Edward gave a wide development. His assembly of the ministers, the higher permanent officials, and the law officers of the Crown for the first time reserved to itself in its judicial capacity the correction of all breaches of the law which the lower courts had failed to repress, whether from weakness, partiality, or corruption, and especially of those lawless outbreaks of the more powerful baronage which defied the common authority of the judges. Such powers were of course capable of terrible abuse, and it shows what real need there was felt to be for their exercise that though regarded with jealousy by Parliament the jurisdiction of

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*Equitable
Juris-
diction.*

CHAP. IV. the royal Council appears to have been steadily put into force through the two centuries which followed. In the reign of Henry the Seventh it took legal and statutory form in the shape of the Court of Star Chamber, and its powers are still exercised in our own day by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. But the same duty of the Crown to do justice where its courts fell short of giving due redress for wrong expressed itself in the jurisdiction of the Chancellor. This great officer of State, who had perhaps originally acted only as President of the Council when discharging its judicial functions, acquired at a very early date an independent judicial position of the same nature. It is by remembering this origin of the Court of Chancery that we understand the nature of the powers it gradually acquired. All grievances of the subject, especially those which sprang from the misconduct of government officials or of powerful oppressors, fell within its cognizance as they fell within that of the Royal Council, and to these were added disputes respecting the wardship of infants, dower, rent-charges, or tithes. Its equitable jurisdiction sprang from the defective nature and the technical and unbending rules of the common law. As the Council had given redress in cases where law became injustice, so the Court of Chancery interfered without regard to the rules of procedure adopted by the common law courts on the petition of a party for whose grievance the common law provided no adequate remedy. An analogous extension of his powers enabled the Chancellor to afford relief in cases of fraud, accident, or abuse of trust, and this side of his jurisdiction was largely extended at a later time by the results of legislation on the tenure of land by ecclesiastical bodies. The separate powers of the Chancellor, whatever was the original date at which they were first exercised, seem to have been thoroughly established under Edward the First.

Law and the Baronage. What reconciled the nation to the exercise of powers such as these by the Crown and its council was the need which was

still to exist for centuries of an effective means of bringing the baronage within the reach of the law. Constitutionally the position of the English nobles had now become established. A King could no longer make laws or levy taxes or even make war without their assent. The nation reposed in them an unwavering trust, for they were no longer the brutal foreigners from whose violence the strong hand of a Norman ruler had been needed to protect his subjects; they were as English as the peasant or the trader. They had won English liberty by their swords, and the tradition of their order bound them to look on themselves as its natural guardians. The close of the Barons' War solved the problem which had so long troubled the realm, the problem how to ensure the government of the realm in accordance with the provisions of the Great Charter, by the transfer of the business of administration into the hands of a standing committee of the greater barons and prelates, acting as chief officers of state in conjunction with specially appointed ministers of the Crown. The body thus composed was known as the Continual Council; and the quiet government of the kingdom by this body in the long interval between the death of Henry the Third and his son's return shows how effective this rule of the nobles was. It is significant of the new relation which they were to strive to establish between themselves and the Crown that in the brief which announced Edward's accession the Council asserted that the new monarch mounted his throne "by the will of the peers." But while the political influence of the baronage as a leading element in the whole nation thus steadily mounted, the personal and purely feudal power of each individual baron on his own estates as steadily fell. The hold which the Crown gained on every noble family by its rights of wardship and marriage, the circuits of the royal judges, the ever narrowing bounds within which baronial justice saw itself circumscribed, the blow dealt by scutage at their military power, the prompt intervention of the Council in their feuds,

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CHAP. IV. lowered the nobles more and more to the common level of their fellow subjects. Much yet remained to be done; for within the general body of the baronage there existed side by side with the nobles whose aims were purely national nobles who saw in the overthrow of the royal despotism simply a chance of setting up again their feudal privileges; and different as the English baronage, taken as a whole, was from a feudal *noblesse* like that of Germany or France there is in every military class a natural drift towards violence and lawlessness. Throughout Edward's reign his strong hand was needed to enforce order on warring nobles. Great earls, such as those of Gloucester and Hereford, carried on private war; in Shropshire the Earl of Arundel waged his feud with Fulk Fitz Warine. To the lesser and poorer nobles the wealth of the trader, the long wain of goods as it passed along the highway, remained a tempting prey. Once, under cover of a mock tournament of monks against canons, a band of country gentlemen succeeded in introducing themselves into the great merchant fair at Boston; at nightfall every booth was on fire, the merchants robbed and slaughtered, and the booty carried off to ships which lay ready at the quay. Streams of gold and silver, ran the tale of popular horror, flowed melted down the gutters to the sea; "all the money in England could hardly make good the loss." Even at the close of Edward's reign lawless bands of "trail-bastons," or club-men, maintained themselves by general outrage, aided the country nobles in their feuds, and wrested money and goods from the great tradesmen.

Edward and the Baronage. The King was strong enough to face and imprison the warring earls, to hang the chiefs of the Boston marauders, and to suppress the outlaws by rigorous commissions. But the repression of baronial outrage was only a part of Edward's policy in relation to the Baronage. Here, as elsewhere he had to carry out the political policy of his house, a policy defined by the great measures of Henry the Second, his institution of scutage, his general assize of

arms, his extension of the itinerant judicature of the royal judges. Forced by the first to an exact discharge of their military duties to the Crown, set by the second in the midst of a people trained equally with the nobles to arms, their judicial tyranny curbed and subjected to the King's justice by the third, the barons had been forced from their old standpoint of an isolated class to the new and nobler position of a people's leaders. Edward watched jealously over the ground which the Crown had gained. Immediately after his landing he appointed a commission of enquiry into the judicial franchises then existing, and on its report (of which the existing "Hundred-Rolls" are the result) itinerant justices were sent in 1278 to discover by what right these franchises were held. The writs of "quo warranto" were roughly met here and there. Earl Warenne bared a rusty sword and flung it on the justices' table. "This, sirs," he said, "is my warrant. By the sword our fathers won their lands when they came over with the Conqueror, and by the sword we will keep them." But the King was far from limiting himself to the mere carrying out of the plans of Henry the Second. Henry had aimed simply at lowering the power of the great feudatories; Edward aimed rather at neutralizing their power by raising the whole body of landowners to the same level. We shall see at a later time the measures which were the issues of this policy, but in the very opening of his reign a significant step pointed to the King's drift. In the summer of 1278 a royal writ ordered all freeholders who held lands to the value of twenty pounds to receive knighthood at the King's hands.

Acts as significant announced Edward's purpose of carrying out another side of Henry's policy, that of limiting in the same way the independent jurisdiction of the Church. He was resolute to force it to become thoroughly national by bearing its due part of the common national burthens, and to break its growing dependence upon Rome. But the ecclesiastical body was jealous of its position as a power

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CHAP. IV. distinct from the power of the Crown, and Edward's policy had hardly declared itself when in 1279 Archbishop Peckham obtained a canon from the clergy by which copies of the Great Charter, with its provisions in favour of the liberties of the Church, were to be affixed to the doors of churches. The step was meant as a defiant protest against all interference, and it was promptly forbidden. An order issued by the Primate to the clergy to declare to their flocks the sentences of excommunication directed against all who obtained royal writs to obstruct suits in church courts, or who, whether royal officers or no, neglected to enforce their sentences, was answered in a yet more emphatic way. By falling into the "dead hand" or "mortmain" of the Church land ceased to render its feudal services; and in 1279 the Statute "de Religiosis," or as it is commonly called "of Mortmain," forbade any further alienation of land to religious bodies in such wise that it should cease to render its due service to the King. The restriction was probably no beneficial one to the country at large, for Churchmen were the best landlords, and it was soon evaded by the ingenuity of the clerical lawyers; but it marked the growing jealousy of any attempt to set aside what was national from serving the general need and profit of the nation. Its immediate effect was to stir the clergy to a bitter resentment. But Edward remained firm, and when the bishops proposed to restrict the royal courts from dealing with cases of patronage or causes which touched the chattels of Churchmen he met their proposals by an instant prohibition.

*Conquest
of Wales.*

The resentment of the clergy had soon the means of showing itself during a new struggle with Wales. The persuasions of his brother David, who had deserted him in the previous war but who deemed his desertion insufficiently rewarded by an English lordship, roused Llewelyn to a fresh revolt. A prophecy of Merlin was said to promise that when English money became round a Prince of Wales should be crowned in London; and at this moment a new

coinage of copper money, coupled with a prohibition to break the silver penny into halves and quarters, as had been commonly done, was supposed to fulfil the prediction. In 1282 Edward marched in overpowering strength into the heart of Wales. But Llewelyn held out in Snowdon with the stubbornness of despair, and the rout of an English force which had crossed into Anglesea prolonged the contest into the winter. The cost of the war fell on the King's treasury. Edward had called for but one general grant through the past eight years of his reign; but he was now forced to appeal to his people, and by an expedient hitherto without precedent two provincial Councils were called for this purpose. That for Southern England met at Northampton, that for Northern at York; and clergy and laity were summoned, though in separate session, to both. Two knights came from every shire, two burgesses from every borough, while the bishops brought their archdeacons, abbots, and the proctors of their cathedral clergy. The grant of the laity was quick and liberal. But both at York and Northampton the clergy showed their grudge at Edward's measures by long delays in supplying his treasury. Pinched however as were his resources and terrible as were the sufferings of his army through the winter Edward's firmness remained unbroken; and rejecting all suggestions of retreat he issued orders for the formation of a new army at Caermarthen to complete the circle of investment round Llewelyn. But the war came suddenly to an end. The Prince sallied from his mountain hold for a raid upon Radnorshire and fell in a petty skirmish on the banks of the Wye. With him died the independence of his race. After six months of flight his brother David was made prisoner; and a Parliament summoned at Shrewsbury in the autumn of 1283, to which each county again sent its two knights and twenty boroughs their two burgesses, sentenced him to a traitor's death. The submission of the lesser chieftains soon followed: and the country was secured by the building of strong castles at Conway and Caernarvon, and the

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CHAP. IV. settlement of English barons on the confiscated soil. The Statute of Wales which Edward promulgated at Rhuddlan in 1284 proposed to introduce English law and the English administration of justice and government into Wales. But little came of the attempt; and it was not till the time of Henry the Eighth that the country was actually incorporated with England and represented in the English Parliament. What Edward had really done was to break the Welsh resistance. The policy with which he followed up his victory (for the "massacre of the bards" is a mere fable) accomplished its end, and though two later rebellions and a ceaseless strife of the natives with the English towns in their midst showed that the country was still far from being reconciled to its conquest, it ceased to be any serious danger to England for a hundred years.

*New
Legisla-
tion.*

From the work of conquest Edward again turned to the work of legislation. In the midst of his struggle with Wales he had shown his care for the commercial classes by a Statute of Merchants in 1283, which provided for the registration of the debts of traders and for their recovery by distraint of the debtor's goods and the imprisonment of his person. The close of the war saw two measures of even greater importance. The second Statute of Westminster which appeared in 1285 is a code of the same sort as the first, amending the Statutes of Mortmain, of Merton, and of Gloucester as well as the laws of dower and advowson, remodelling the system of justices of assize, and curbing the abuses of manorial jurisdiction. In the same year appeared the greatest of Edward's measures for the enforcement of public order. The Statute of Winchester revived and reorganized the old institutions of national police and national defence. It regulated the action of the hundred, the duty of watch and ward, and the gathering of the fyrd or militia of the realm as Henry the Second had moulded it into form in his Assize of Arms. Every man was bound to hold himself in readiness, duly armed, for the King's service in case of invasion or revolt,

and to pursue felons when hue and cry were made after them. Every district was held responsible for crimes committed within its bounds; the gates of each town were to be shut at nightfall; and all strangers were required to give an account of themselves to the magistrates of any borough which they entered. By a provision which illustrates at once the social and physical condition of the country at the time all brushwood was ordered to be destroyed within a space of two hundred feet on either side of the public highway as a security for travellers against sudden attacks from robbers. To enforce the observance of this act knights were appointed in every shire under the name of Conservators of the Peace, a name which as the benefit of these local magistrates was more sensibly felt and their powers were more largely extended was changed into that which they still retain of Justices of the Peace. So orderly however was the realm that Edward was able in 1286 to pass over sea to his foreign dominions, and to spend the next three years in reforming their government. But the want of his guiding hand was at last felt; and the Parliament of 1289 refused a new tax till the King came home again.

He returned to find the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford at war, and his judges charged with violence and corruption. The two Earls were brought to peace, and Earl Gilbert allied closely to the royal house by a marriage with the King's daughter Johanna. After a careful investigation the judicial abuses were recognized and amended. Two of the chief justices were banished from the realm and their colleagues imprisoned and fined. But these administrative measures were only preludes to a great legislative act which appeared in 1290. The Third Statute of Westminster, or, to use the name by which it is more commonly known, the Statute "Quia Emptores," is one of those legislative efforts which mark the progress of a wide social revolution in the country at large. The number of the greater barons was diminishing every day,

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while the number of the country gentry and of the more substantial yeomanry was increasing with the increase of the national wealth. The increase showed itself in a growing desire to become proprietors of land. Tenants of the barons received under-tenants on condition of their rendering them similar services to those which they themselves rendered to their lords; and the baronage, while duly receiving the services in compensation for which they had originally granted their lands in fee, saw with jealousy the feudal profits of these new under-tenants, the profits of wardships or of reliefs and the like, in a word the whole increase in the value of the estate consequent on its subdivision and higher cultivation passing into other hands than their own. The purpose of the statute "Quia Emptores" was to check this process by providing that in any case of alienation the sub-tenant should henceforth hold, not of the tenant, but directly of the superior lord. But its result was to promote instead of hindering the transfer and subdivision of land. The tenant who was compelled before the passing of the statute to retain in any case so much of the estate as enabled him to discharge his feudal services to the over-lord of whom he held it, was now enabled by a process analogous to the modern sale of "tenant-right," to transfer both land and services to new holders. However small the estates thus created might be, the bulk were held directly of the Crown; and this class of lesser gentry and freeholders grew steadily from this time in numbers and importance.

The
Crown
and the
Jews.

The year which saw "Quia Emptores" saw a step which remains the great blot upon Edward's reign. The work abroad had exhausted the royal treasury, and he bought a grant from his Parliament by listening to their wishes in the matter of the Jews. Jewish traders had followed William the Conqueror from Normandy, and had been enabled by his protection to establish themselves in separate quarters or "Jewries" in all larger English towns. The Jew had no right or citizenship in the land. The

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Jewry in which he lived was exempt from the common law. He was simply the King's chattel, and his life and goods were at the King's mercy. But he was too valuable a possession to be lightly thrown away. If the Jewish merchant had no standing-ground in the local court the king enabled him to sue before a special justiciar; his bonds were deposited for safety in a chamber of the royal palace at Westminster; he was protected against the popular hatred in the free exercise of his religion and allowed to build synagogues and to manage his own ecclesiastical affairs by means of a chief rabbi. The royal protection was dictated by no spirit of tolerance or mercy. To the kings the Jew was a mere engine of finance. The wealth which he accumulated was wrung from him whenever the crown had need, and torture and imprisonment were resorted to when milder means failed. It was the gold of the Jew that filled the royal treasury at the outbreak of war or of revolt. It was in the Hebrew coffers that the foreign kings found strength to hold their baronage at bay.

That the presence of the Jew was, at least in the earlier years of his settlement, beneficial to the nation at large there can be little doubt. His arrival was the arrival of a capitalist; and heavy as was the usury he necessarily exacted in the general insecurity of the time his loans gave an impulse to industry. The century which followed the Conquest witnessed an outburst of architectural energy which covered the land with castles and cathedrals; but castle and cathedral alike owed their erection to the loans of the Jew. His own example gave a new vigour to domestic architecture. The buildings which, as at Lincoln and Bury St. Edmund's, still retain their name of "Jews' Houses" were almost the first houses of stone which superseded the mere hovels of the English burghers. Nor was their influence simply industrial. Through their connexion with the Jewish schools in Spain and the East they opened a way for the revival of physical sciences. A

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Jewish medical school seems to have existed at Oxford; Roger Bacon himself studied under English rabbis. But the general progress of civilization now drew little help from the Jew, while the coming of the Cahorsine and Italian bankers drove him from the field of commercial finance. He fell back on the petty usury of loans to the poor, a trade necessarily accompanied with much of extortion and which roused into fiercer life the religious hatred against their race. Wild stories floated about of children carried off to be circumcized or crucified, and a Lincoln boy who was found slain in a Jewish house was canonized by popular reverence as "St. Hugh." The first work of the Friars was to settle in the Jewish quarters and attempt their conversion, but the popular fury rose too fast for these gentler means of reconciliation. When the Franciscans saved seventy Jews from hanging by their prayer to Henry the Third the populace angrily refused the brethren alms.

The
Jewish
Defiance.

But all this growing hate was met with a bold defiance. The picture which is commonly drawn of the Jew as timid, silent, crouching under oppression, however truly it may represent the general position of his race throughout mediæval Europe, is far from being borne out by historical fact on this side the Channel. In England the attitude of the Jew, almost to the very end, was an attitude of proud and even insolent defiance. He knew that the royal policy exempted him from the common taxation, the common justice, the common obligations of Englishmen. Usurer, extortioner as the realm held him to be, the royal justice would secure him the repayment of his bonds. A royal commission visited with heavy penalties any outbreak of violence against the King's "chattels." The Red King actually forbade the conversion of a Jew to the Christian faith; it was a poor exchange, he said, that would rid him of a valuable property and give him only a subject. We see in such a case as that of Oxford the insolence that grew out of this

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consciousness of the royal protection. Here as elsewhere the Jewry was a town within a town, with its own language, its own religion and law, its peculiar commerce, its peculiar dress. No city bailiff could penetrate into the square of little alleys which lay behind the present Town Hall; the Church itself was powerless to prevent a synagogue from rising in haughty rivalry over against the cloister of St. Frideswide. Prior Philip of St. Frideswide complains bitterly of a certain Hebrew who stood at his door as the procession of the saint passed by, mocking at the miracles which were said to be wrought at her shrine. Halting and then walking firmly on his feet, showing his hands clenched as if with palsy and then flinging open his fingers, the Jew claimed gifts and oblations from the crowd that flocked to St. Frideswide's shrine on the ground that such recoveries of life and limb were quite as real as any that Frideswide ever wrought. Sickness and death in the prior's story avenge the saint on her blasphemer, but no earthly power, ecclesiastical or civil, seems to have ventured to deal with him. A more daring act of fanaticism showed the temper of the Jews even at the close of Henry the Third's reign. As the usual procession of scholars and citizens returned from St. Frideswide's on the Ascension Day of 1268 a Jew suddenly burst from a group of his comrades in front of the synagogue, and wrenching the crucifix from its bearer trod it under foot. But even in presence of such an outrage as this the terror of the Crown sheltered the Oxford Jews from any burst of popular vengeance. The sentence of the King condemned them to set up a cross of marble on the spot where the crime was committed, but even this sentence was in part remitted, and a less offensive place was found for the cross in an open plot by Merton College.

Up to Edward's day indeed the royal protection had never wavered. Henry the Second granted the Jews a right of burial outside every city where they dwelt. Richard punished heavily a massacre of the Jews at York,

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of the
Jews.

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and organized a mixed court of Jews and Christians for the registration of their contracts. John suffered none to plunder them save himself, though he once wrested from them a sum equal to a year's revenue of his realm. The troubles of the next reign brought in a harvest greater than even the royal greed could reap; the Jews grew wealthy enough to acquire estates; and only a burst of popular feeling prevented a legal decision which would have enabled them to own freeholds. But the sack of Jewry after Jewry showed the popular hatred during the Barons' war, and at its close fell on the Jews the more terrible persecution of the law. To the cry against usury and the religious fanaticism which threatened them was now added the jealousy with which the nation that had grown up round the Charter regarded all exceptional jurisdictions or exemptions from the common law and the common burthens of the realm. As Edward looked on the privileges of the Church or the baronage, so his people looked on the privileges of the Jews. The growing weight of the Parliament told against them. Statute after statute hemmed them in. They were forbidden to hold real property, to employ Christian servants, to move through the streets without the two white tablets of wool on their breasts which distinguished their race. They were prohibited from building new synagogues or eating with Christians or acting as physicians to them. Their trade, already crippled by the rivalry of the bankers of Cahors, was annihilated by a royal order which bade them renounce usury under pain of death. At last persecution could do no more, and Edward, eager at the moment to find supplies for his treasury and himself swayed by the fanaticism of his subjects, bought the grant of a fifteenth from clergy and laity by consenting to drive the Jews from his realm. No share of the enormities which accompanied this expulsion can fall upon the King, for he not only suffered the fugitives to take their personal wealth with them but punished with the halter those who plundered them at

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sea. But the expulsion was none the less cruel. Of the sixteen thousand who preferred exile to apostasy few reached the shores of France. Many were wrecked, others robbed and flung overboard. One ship-master turned out a crew of wealthy merchants on to a sandbank and bade them call a new Moses to save them from the sea.

From the expulsion of the Jews, as from his nobler schemes of legal and administrative reforms, Edward was suddenly called away to face complex questions which awaited him in the North. At the moment which we have reached the kingdom of the Scots was still an aggregate of four distinct countries, each with its different people, its different tongue, its different history. The old Pictish kingdom across the Firth of Forth, the original Scot kingdom in Argyle, the district of Cumbria or Strathclyde, and the Lowlands which stretched from the Firth of Forth to the English border, had become united under the Kings of the Scots; Pictland by inheritance, Cumbria by a grant from the English King Eadmund, the Lowlands by conquest, confirmed as English tradition alleged by a grant from Cnut. The shadowy claim of dependence on the English Crown which dated from the days when a Scotch King "commended" himself and his people to Ælfred's son Eadward, a claim strengthened by the grant of Cumbria to Malcolm as a "fellow worker" of the English sovereign "by sea and land," may have been made more real through this last convention. But whatever change the acquisition of the Lowlands made in the relation of the Scot Kings to the English sovereigns, it certainly affected in a very marked way their relation both to England and to their own realm. Its first result was the fixing of the royal residence in their new southern dominion at Edinburgh; and the English civilization which surrounded them from the moment of this settlement on what was purely English ground changed the Scot Kings in all but blood into Englishmen. The marriage of King Malcolm with Margaret, the sister of Eadgar Ætheling, not only

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hastened this change but opened a way to the English crown. Their children were regarded by a large party within England as representatives of the older royal race and as claimants of the throne, and this danger grew as William's devastation of the North not only drove fresh multitudes of Englishmen to settle in the Lowlands but filled the Scotch court with English nobles who fled thither for refuge. So formidable indeed became the pretensions of the Scot Kings that they forced the ablest of our Norman sovereigns into a complete change of policy. The Conqueror and William the Red had met the threats of the Scot sovereigns by invasions which ended again and again in an illusory homage, but the marriage of Henry the First with the Scottish Matilda robbed the claims of the Scottish line of much of their force while it enabled him to draw their kings into far closer relations with the Norman throne. King David not only abandoned the ambitious dreams of his predecessors to place himself at the head of his niece Matilda's party in her contest with Stephen, but as Henry's brother-in-law he figured as the first noble of the English Court and found English models and English support in the work of organization which he attempted within his own dominions. As the marriage with Margaret had changed Malcolm from a Celtic chieftain into an English King, so that of Matilda brought about the conversion of David into a Norman and feudal sovereign. His court was filled with Norman nobles from the South, such as the Balliols and Bruces who were destined to play so great a part afterwards but who now for the first time obtained fiefs in the Scottish realm, and a feudal jurisprudence modelled on that of England was introduced into the Lowlands.

Scotch
 and
 English
 Crowns.

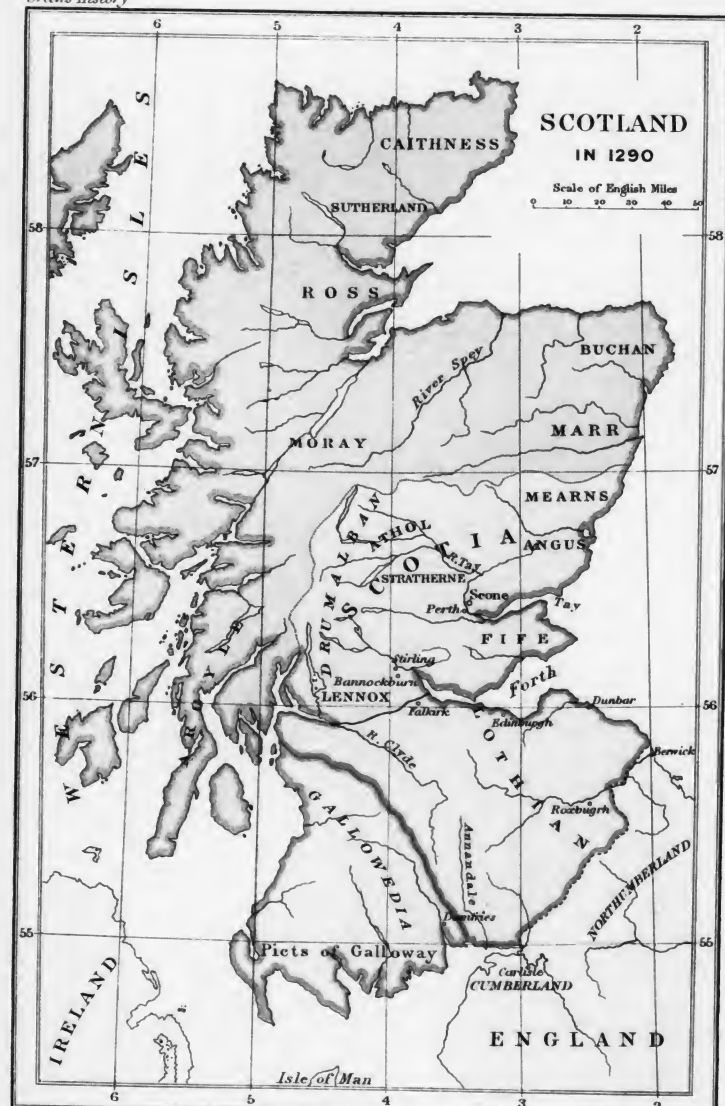
A fresh connexion between Scotland and the English sovereigns began with the grant of lordships within England itself to the Scot kings or their sons. The Earldom of Northumberland was held by David's son Henry, that of

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Huntingdon by Henry the Lion. Homage was sometimes rendered, whether for these lordships, for the Lowlands, or for the whole Scottish realm, but it was the capture of William the Lion during the revolt of the English baronage which first suggested to the ambition of Henry the Second the project of a closer dependence of Scotland on the English Crown. To gain his freedom William consented to hold his kingdom of Henry and his heirs. The prelates and lords of Scotland did homage to Henry as to their direct lord, and a right of appeal in all Scotch causes was allowed to the superior court of the English suzerain. From this bondage however Scotland was freed by the prodigality of Richard who allowed her to buy back the freedom she had forfeited. Both sides fell into their old position, but both were ceasing gradually to remember the distinctions between the various relations in which the Scot King stood for his different provinces to the English Crown. Scotland had come to be thought of as a single country; and the court of London transferred to the whole of it those claims of direct feudal suzerainty which at most applied only to Strathclyde, while the court of Edinburgh looked on the English Lowlands as holding no closer relation to England than the Pictish lands beyond the Forth. Any difficulties which arose were evaded by a legal compromise. The Scot Kings repeatedly did homage to the English sovereign but with a reservation of rights which were prudently left unspecified. The English King accepted the homage on the assumption that it was rendered to him as overlord of the Scottish realm, and this assumption was neither granted nor denied. For nearly a hundred years the relations of the two countries were thus kept peaceful and friendly, and the death of Alexander the Third seemed destined to remove even the necessity of protests by a closer union of the two kingdoms. Alexander had wedded his only daughter to the King of Norway, and after long negotiation the Scotch Parliament proposed the marriage of Margaret, "the Maid of Norway," the girl who

CHAP. IV. was the only issue of this marriage and so heiress of the kingdom, with the son of Edward the First. It was however carefully provided in the marriage treaty which was concluded at Brigham in 1290 that Scotland should remain a separate and free kingdom, and that its laws and customs should be preserved inviolate. No military aid was to be claimed by the English King, no Scotch appeal to be carried to an English court. But this project was abruptly frustrated by the child's death during her voyage to Scotland in the following October, and with the rise of claimant after claimant of the vacant throne Edward was drawn into far other relations to the Scottish realm.

The Scotch Succession. Of the thirteen pretenders to the throne of Scotland only three could be regarded as serious claimants. By the extinction of the line of William the Lion the right of succession passed to the daughters of his brother David. The claim of John Balliol, Lord of Galloway, rested on his descent from the elder of these; that of Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, on his descent from the second; that of John Hastings, Lord of Abergavenny, on his descent from the third. It is clear that at this crisis every one in Scotland or out of it recognized some sort of overlordship in Edward, for the Norwegian King, the Primate of St. Andrews, and seven of the Scotch Earls had already appealed to him before Margaret's death; and her death was followed by the consent both of the claimants and the Council of Regency to refer the question of the succession to his decision in a Parliament at Norham. But the overlordship which the Scots acknowledged was something far less direct and definite than the superiority which Edward claimed at the opening of this conference in May, 1291. His claim was supported by excerpts from monastic chronicles and by the slow advance of an English army; while the Scotch lords, taken by surprise, found little help in the delay which was granted them. At the opening of June therefore in common with nine of the claimants they formally admitted Edward's direct suzerainty. To the nobles in fact the



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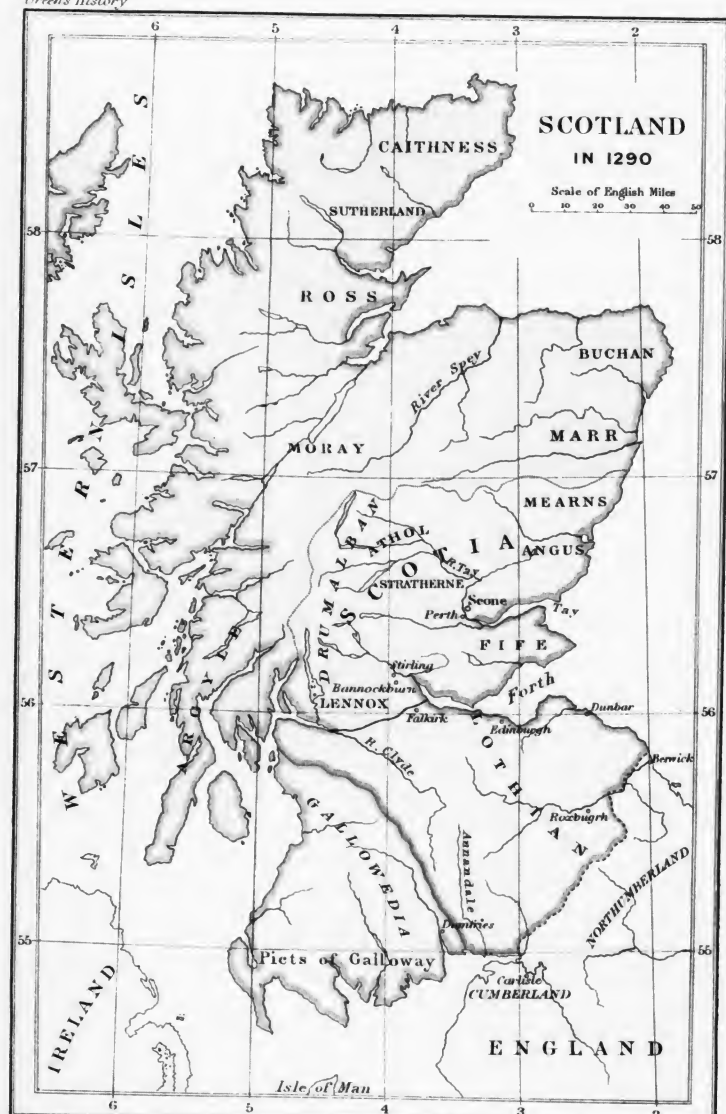
Stanford's Geog. Estab.

concession must have seemed a small one, for like the principal claimants they were for the most part Norman in blood, with estates in both countries, and looking for honours and pensions from the English Court. From the Commons who were gathered with the nobles at Norham no such admission of Edward's claims could be extorted; but in Scotland, feudalized as it had been by David, the Commons were as yet of little weight and their opposition was quietly passed by. All the rights of a feudal suzerain were at once assumed by the English King; he entered into the possession of the country as into that of a disputed fief to be held by its overlord till the dispute was settled, his peace was sworn throughout the land, its castles delivered into his charge, while its bishops and nobles swore homage to him directly as their lord superior. Scotland was thus reduced to the subjection which she had experienced under Henry the Second; but the full discussion which followed over the various claims to the throne showed that while exacting to the full what he believed to be his right Edward desired to do justice to the country itself. The body of commissioners which the King named to report on the claims to the throne were mainly Scotch. A proposal for the partition of the realm among the claimants was rejected as contrary to Scotch law. On the report of the commissioners after a twelvemonth's investigation in favour of Balliol as representative of the elder branch at the close of the year 1292, his homage was accepted for the whole kingdom of Scotland with a full acknowledgement of the services due from him to its overlord. The castles were at once delivered to the new monarch, and for a time there was peace.

With the accession of Balliol and the rendering of his homage for the Scottish realm, the greatness of Edward reached its height. He was lord of Britain as no English King had been before. The last traces of Welsh independence were trodden under foot. The shadowy claims of supremacy over Scotland were changed into a direct

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CHAP. IV. overlordship. Across the one sea Edward was lord of Guienne, across the other of Ireland, and in England itself a wise and generous policy had knit the whole nation round his throne. Firmly as he still clung to prerogatives which the baronage were as firm not to own, the main struggle for the Charter was over. Justice and good government were secured. The personal despotism which John had striven to build up, the imperial autocracy which had haunted the imagination of Henry the Third, were alike set aside. The rule of Edward, vigorous and effective as it was, was a rule of law, and of law enacted not by the royal will, but by the common council of the realm. Never had English ruler reached a greater height of power, nor was there any sign to warn the King of the troubles which awaited him. France, jealous as it was of his greatness and covetous of his Gascon possessions, he could hold at bay. Wales was growing tranquil. Scotland gave few signs of discontent or restlessness in the first year that followed the homage of its King. Under John Balliol it had simply fallen back into the position of dependence which it held under William the Lion; and Edward had no purpose of pushing further his rights as suzerain than Henry the Second had done. One claim of the English Crown indeed was soon a subject of dispute between the lawyers of the Scotch and of the English Council boards. Edward would have granted as freely as Balliol himself that though Scotland was a dependent kingdom it was far from being an ordinary fief of the English Crown. By feudal custom a distinction had always been held to exist between the relations of a dependent king to a superior lord and those of a vassal noble to his sovereign. At Balliol's homage indeed Edward had disclaimed any right to the ordinary feudal incidents of a fief, those of wardship or marriage, and in this disclaimer he was only repeating the reservations of the marriage treaty of Brigham. There were other customs of the Scotch realm as incontestable as these.

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Even after the treaty of Falaise the Scotch King had not been held bound to attend the council of the English baronage, to do service in English warfare, or to contribute on the part of his Scotch realm to English aids. If no express acknowledgement of these rights had been made by Edward, for some time after his acceptance of Balliol's homage they were practically observed. The claim of independent justice was more doubtful, as it was of higher import than these. The judicial independence of Scotland had been expressly reserved in the marriage treaty. It was certain that no appeal from a Scotch King's court to that of his overlord had been allowed since the days of William the Lion. But in the jurisprudence of the feudal lawyers the right of ultimate appeal was the test of sovereignty, and Edward regarded Balliol's homage as having placed him precisely in the position of William the Lion and subjected his decisions to those of his overlord. He was resolute therefore to assert the supremacy of his court and to receive Scotch appeals.

Even here however the quarrel seemed likely to end only in legal bickering. Balliol at first gave way, and it was not till 1293 that he alleged himself forced by the resentment both of his Baronage and his people to take up an attitude of resistance. While appearing therefore formally at Westminster he refused to answer an appeal before the English courts save by advice of his Council. But real as the resentment of his barons may have been, it was not Scotland which really spurred Balliol to this defiance. His wounded pride had made him the tool of a power beyond the sea. The keenness with which France had watched every step of Edward's success in the north sprang not merely from a natural jealousy of his greatness but from its bearing on a great object of French ambition. One fragment of Eleanor's inheritance still remained to her descendants, Guienne and Gascony, the fair lands along the Garonne and the territory which

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*The
French
Attack.*

CHAP. IV. stretched south of that river to the Pyrenees. It was this territory that now tempted the greed of Philip the Fair, and it was in feeding the strife between England and the Scotch King that Philip saw an opening for winning it. French envoys therefore brought promises of aid to the Scotch Court; and no sooner had these intrigues moved Balliol to resent the claims of his overlord than Philip found a pretext for open quarrel with Edward in the frays which went constantly on in the Channel between the mariners of Normandy and those of the Cinque Ports. They culminated at this moment in a great sea-fight which proved fatal to eight thousand Frenchmen, and for this Philip haughtily demanded redress. Edward saw at once the danger of his position. He did his best to allay the storm by promise of satisfaction to France, and by addressing threats of punishment to the English seamen. But Philip still clung to his wrong, while the national passion which was to prove for a hundred years to come strong enough to hold down the royal policy of peace showed itself in a characteristic defiance with which the seamen of the Cinque Ports met Edward's menaces. "Be the King's Council well advised," ran this remonstrance, "that if wrong or grievance be done them in any fashion against right, they will sooner forsake wives, children, and all that they have, and go seek through the seas where they shall think to make their profit." In spite therefore of Edward's efforts the contest continued, and Philip found in it an opportunity to cite the King before his court at Paris for wrongs done to him as suzerain. It was hard for Edward to dispute the summons without weakening the position which his own sovereign courts had taken up towards the Scotch King, and in a final effort to avert the conflict the King submitted to a legal decision of the question, and to a formal cession of Guienne into Philip's hands for forty days in acknowledgement of his supremacy. Bitter as the sacrifice must have been it failed to win peace. The forty days had no sooner passed than Philip refused to restore

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the fortresses which had been left in pledge. In February 1294 he declared the English king contumacious, and in May declared his fiefs forfeited to the French Crown. Edward was driven to take up arms, but a revolt in Wales deferred the expedition to the following year. No sooner however was it again taken in hand than it became clear that a double danger had to be met. The summons which Edward addressed to the Scotch barons to follow him in arms to Guienne was disregarded. It was in truth, as we have seen, a breach of customary law, and was probably meant to force Scotland into an open declaration of its connexion with France. A second summons was followed by a more formal refusal. The greatness of the danger threw Edward on England itself. For a war in Guienne and the north he needed supplies; but he needed yet more the firm support of his people in a struggle which, little as he foresaw its ultimate results, would plainly be one of great difficulty and danger. In 1295 he called a Parliament to counsel with him on the affairs of the realm, but with the large statesmanship which distinguished him he took this occasion of giving the Parliament a shape and organization which has left its assembly the most important event in English history.

To realize its importance we must briefly review the changes by which the Great Council of the Norman Kings had been gradually transforming itself into what was henceforth to be known as the English Parliament. Neither the Meeting of the Wise Men before the Conquest nor the Great Council of the Barons after it had been in any legal or formal way representative bodies. The first theoretically included all free holders of land, but it shrank at an early time into a gathering of earls, higher nobles, and bishops with the officers and thegns of the royal household. Little change was made in the composition of this assembly by the Conquest, for the Great Council of the Norman kings was supposed to include all tenants who held directly of the Crown, the

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*The
Great
Council.*

CHAP. IV. bishops and greater abbots (whose character as independent spiritual members tended more and more to merge in their position as barons), and the high officers of the Court. But though its composition remained the same, the character of the assembly was essentially altered; from a free gathering of "Wise Men" it sank to a Royal Court of feudal vassals. Its functions too seem to have become almost nominal and its powers to have been restricted to the sanctioning, without debate or possibility of refusal, all grants demanded from it by the Crown. But nominal as such a sanction might be, the "counsel and consent" of the Great Council was necessary for the legal validity of every considerable fiscal or political measure. Its existence therefore remained an effectual protest against the imperial theories advanced by the lawyers of Henry the Second which declared all legislative power to reside wholly in the sovereign. It was in fact under Henry that these assemblies became more regular, and their functions more important. The reforms which marked his reign were issued in the Great Council, and even financial matters were suffered to be debated there. But it was not till the grant of the Great Charter that the powers of this assembly over taxation were formally recognized, and the principle established that no burthen beyond the customary feudal aids might be imposed "save by the Common Council of the Realm."

*Greater
and
Lesser
Barons.*

The same document first expressly regulated its form. In theory, as we have seen, the Great Council consisted of all who held land directly of the Crown. But the same causes which restricted attendance at the Witenagemote to the greater nobles told on the actual composition of the Council of Barons. While the attendance of the ordinary tenants in chief, the Knights or "Lesser Barons" as they were called, was burthensome from its expense to themselves, their numbers and their dependence on the higher nobles made the assembly of these knights dangerous to the Crown. As early therefore as the

time of Henry the First we find a distinction recognized between the "Greater Barons," of whom the Council was usually composed, and the "Lesser Barons" who formed the bulk of the tenants of the Crown. But though the attendance of the latter had become rare their right of attendance remained intact. While enacting that the prelates and greater barons should be summoned by special writs to each gathering of the Council a remarkable provision of the Great Charter orders a general summons to be issued through the Sheriff to all direct tenants of the Crown. The provision was probably intended to rouse the lesser Baronage to the exercise of rights which had practically passed into desuetude, but as the clause is omitted in later issues of the Charter we may doubt whether the principle it embodied ever received more than a very limited application. There are traces of the attendance of a few of the lesser knighthood, gentry perhaps of the neighbourhood where the assembly was held, in some of its meetings under Henry the Third, but till a late period in the reign of his successor the Great Council practically remained a gathering of the greater barons, the prelates, and the high officers of the Crown.

The change which the Great Charter had failed to accomplish was now however brought about by the social circumstances of the time. One of the most remarkable of these was a steady decrease in the number of the greater nobles. The bulk of the earldoms had already lapsed to the Crown through the extinction of the families of their possessors; of the greater baronies, many had practically ceased to exist by their division among female co-heiresses, many through the constant struggle of the poorer nobles to rid themselves of their rank by a disclaimer so as to escape the burthen of higher taxation and attendance in Parliament which it involved. How far this diminution had gone we may see from the fact that hardly more than a hundred barons sat in the earlier Councils of Edward's reign. But while the number of

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tional
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those who actually exercised the privilege of assisting in Parliament was rapidly diminishing, the numbers and wealth of the "lesser baronage," whose right of attendance had become a mere constitutional tradition, was as rapidly increasing. The long peace and prosperity of the realm, the extension of its commerce and the increased export of wool, were swelling the ranks and incomes of the country gentry as well as of the freeholders and substantial yeomanry. We have already noticed the effects of the increase of wealth in begetting a passion for the possession of land which makes this reign so critical a period in the history of the English freeholder; but the same tendency had to some extent existed in the preceding century, and it was a consciousness of the growing importance of this class of rural proprietors which induced the barons at the moment of the Great Charter to make their fruitless attempt to induce them to take part in the deliberations of the Great Council. But while the barons desired their presence as an aid against the Crown, the Crown itself desired it as a means of rendering taxation more efficient. So long as the Great Council remained a mere assembly of magnates it was necessary for the King's ministers to treat separately with the other orders of the state as to the amount and assessment of their contributions. The grant made in the Great Council was binding only on the barons and prelates who made it; but before the aids of the boroughs, the Church, or the shires could reach the royal treasury, a separate negotiation had to be conducted by the officers of the Exchequer with the reeves of each town, the sheriff and shire-court of each county, and the archdeacons of each diocese. Bargains of this sort would be the more tedious and disappointing as the necessities of the Crown increased in the later years of Edward, and it became a matter of fiscal expediency to obtain the sanction of any proposed taxation through the presence of these classes in the Great Council itself.

The effort however to revive the old personal attendance

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of the lesser baronage which had broken down half a century before could hardly be renewed at a time when the increase of their numbers made it more impracticable than ever; but a means of escape from this difficulty was fortunately suggested by the very nature of the court through which alone a summons could be addressed to the landed knighthood. Amidst the many judicial reforms of Henry or Edward the Shire Court remained unchanged. The haunted mound or the immemorial oak round which the assembly gathered (for the court was often held in the open air) were the relics of a time before the free kingdom had sunk into a shire and its Meetings of the Wise into a County Court. But save that the King's reeve had taken the place of the King and that the Norman legislation had displaced the Bishop and set four Coroners by the Sheriff's side, the gathering of the freeholders remained much as of old. The local knighthood, the yeomanry, the husbandmen of the county, were all represented in the crowd that gathered round the Sheriff, as guarded by his liveried followers he published the King's writs, announced his demand of aids, received the presentment of criminals and the inquest of the local jurors, assessed the taxation of each district, or listened solemnly to appeals for justice, civil and criminal, from all who held themselves oppressed in the lesser courts of the hundred or the soke. It was in the County Court alone that the Sheriff could legally summon the lesser baronage to attend the Great Council, and it was in the actual constitution of this assembly that the Crown found a solution of the difficulty which we have stated. For the principle of representation by which it was finally solved was coeval with the Shire Court itself. In all cases of civil or criminal justice the twelve sworn assessors of the Sheriff, as members of a class, though not formally deputed for that purpose, practically represented the judicial opinion of the county at large. From every hundred came groups of twelve sworn deputies, the "jurors" through

CHAP. IV. whom the presentments of the district were made to the royal officer and with whom the assessment of its share in the general taxation was arranged. The husbandmen on the outskirts of the crowd, clad in the brown smock frock which still lingers in the garb of our carters and ploughmen, were broken up into little knots of five, a reeve and four assistants, each of which knots formed the representative of a rural township. If in fact we regard the Shire Courts as lineally the descendants of our earliest English Witenagemotes, we may justly claim the principle of parliamentary representation as among the oldest of our institutions.

*Knights
of the
Shire.*

It was easy to give this principle a further extension by the choice of representatives of the lesser barons in the shire courts to which they were summoned; but it was only slowly and tentatively that this process was applied to the reconstitution of the Great Council. As early as the close of John's reign there are indications of the approaching change in the summons of "four discreet knights" from every county. Fresh need of local support was felt by both parties in the conflict of the succeeding reign, and Henry and his barons alike summoned knights from each shire "to meet on the common business of the realm." It was no doubt with the same purpose that the writs of Earl Simon ordered the choice of knights in each shire for his famous Parliament of 1265. Something like a continuous attendance may be dated from the accession of Edward, but it was long before the knights were regarded as more than local deputies for the assessment of taxation or admitted to a share in the general business of the Great Council. The statute "*Quia Emptores*," for instance, was passed in it before the knights who had been summoned could attend. Their participation in the deliberative power of Parliament, as well as their regular and continuous attendance, dates only from the Parliament of 1295. But a far greater constitutional change in their position had already taken place through the extension of electoral rights to the

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freeholders at large. The one class entitled to a seat in the Great Council was, as we have seen, that of the lesser baronage; and it was of the lesser baronage alone that the knights were in theory the representatives. But the necessity of holding their election in the County Court rendered any restriction of the electoral body physically impossible. The court was composed of the whole body of freeholders, and no sheriff could distinguish the "aye, aye" of the yeoman from the "aye, aye" of the lesser baron. From the first moment therefore of their attendance we find the knights regarded not as mere representatives of the baronage but as knights of the shire, and by this silent revolution the whole body of the rural freeholders were admitted to a share in the government of the realm.

The financial difficulties of the Crown led to a far more radical revolution in the admission into the Great Council of representatives from the boroughs. The presence of knights from each shire was the recognition of an older right, but no right of attendance or share in the national "counsel and assent" could be pleaded for the burgesses of the towns. On the other hand the rapid development of their wealth made them every day more important as elements in the national taxation. From all payment of the dues or fines exacted by the King as the original lord of the soil on which they had in most cases grown up the towns had long since freed themselves by what was called the purchase of the "farm of the borough;" in other words, by the commutation of these uncertain dues for a fixed sum paid annually to the Crown and apportioned by their own magistrates among the general body of the burghers. All that the King legally retained was the right enjoyed by every great proprietor of levying a corresponding taxation on his tenants in demesne under the name of "a free aid" whenever a grant was made for the national necessities by the barons of the Great Council. But the temptation of appropriating the growing wealth of the mercantile class proved stronger than legal restric-

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tions, and we find both Henry the Third and his son assuming a right of imposing taxes at pleasure and without any authority from the Council even over London itself. The burgesses could refuse indeed the invitation to contribute to the "free aids" demanded by the royal officers, but the suspension of their markets or trading privileges brought them in the end to submission. Each of these "free aids" however had to be extorted after a long wrangle between the borough and the officers of the Exchequer; and if the towns were driven to comply with what they considered an extortion they could generally force the Crown by evasions and delays to a compromise and abatement of its original demands.

*Burgesses
in Par-
liament.*

The same financial reasons therefore existed for desiring the presence of borough representatives in the Great Council as existed in the case of the shires; but it was the genius of Earl Simon which first broke through the older constitutional tradition and summoned two burgesses from each town to the Parliament of 1265. Time had indeed to pass before the large and statesmanlike conception of the great patriot could meet with full acceptance. Through the earlier part of Edward's reign we find a few instances of the presence of representatives from the towns, but their scanty numbers and the irregularity of their attendance show that they were summoned rather to afford financial information to the Great Council than as representatives in it of an Estate of the Realm. But every year pleaded stronger and stronger for their inclusion, and in the Parliament of 1295 that of 1265 found itself at last reproduced. "It was from me that he learnt it," Earl Simon had cried, as he recognized the military skill of Edward's onset at Evesham; "it was from me that he learnt it," his spirit might have exclaimed as he saw the King gathering at last two burgesses "from every city, borough, and leading town" within his realm to sit side by side with the knights, nobles, and barons of the Great Council. To the Crown the change was from the first an

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advantageous one. The grants of subsidies by the burgesses in Parliament proved more profitable than the previous extortions of the Exchequer. The proportions of their grant generally exceeded that of the other estates. Their representatives too proved far more compliant with the royal will than the barons or knights of the shire; only on one occasion during Edward's reign did the burgesses waver from their general support of the Crown.

It was easy indeed to control them, for the selection of boroughs to be represented remained wholly in the King's hands, and their numbers could be increased or diminished at the King's pleasure. The determination was left to the sheriff, and at a hint from the royal Council a sheriff of Wilts would cut down the number of represented boroughs in his shire from eleven to three, or a sheriff of Bucks declare he could find but a single borough, that of Wycomb, within the bounds of his county. Nor was this exercise of the prerogative hampered by any anxiety on the part of the towns to claim representative privileges. It was hard to suspect that a power before which the Crown would have to bow lay in the ranks of soberly-clad traders, summoned only to assess the contributions of their boroughs, and whose attendance was as difficult to secure as it seemed burthensome to themselves and the towns who sent them. The mass of citizens took little or no part in their choice, for they were elected in the county court by a few of the principal burghers deputed for the purpose; but the cost of their maintenance, the two shillings a day paid to the burgess by his town as four were paid to the knight by his county, was a burden from which the boroughs made desperate efforts to escape. Some persisted in making no return to the sheriff. Some bought charters of exemption from the troublesome privilege. Of the 165 who were summoned by Edward the First more than a third ceased to send representatives after a single compliance with the royal summons. During the whole time from the reign of

*Re-
luctance to
attend.*

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Edward the Third to the reign of Henry the Sixth the sheriff of Lancashire declined to return the names of any boroughs at all within that county "on account of their poverty." Nor were the representatives themselves more anxious to appear than their boroughs to send them. The busy country squire and the thrifty trader were equally reluctant to undergo the trouble and expense of a journey to Westminster. Legal measures were often necessary to ensure their presence. Writs still exist in abundance such as that by which Walter le Rous is "held to bail in eight oxen and four cart-horses to come before the King on the day specified" for attendance in Parliament. But in spite of obstacles such as these the presence of representatives from the boroughs may be regarded as continuous from the Parliament of 1295. As the representation of the lesser barons had widened through a silent change into that of the shire, so that of the boroughs—restricted in theory to those in the royal demesne—seems practically from Edward's time to have been extended to all who were in a condition to pay the cost of their representatives' support. By a change as silent within the Parliament itself the burgess, originally summoned to take part only in matters of taxation, was at last admitted to a full share in the deliberations and authority of the other orders of the State.

Parliament and
the
Clergy.

The admission of the burgesses and knights of the shire to the assembly of 1295 completed the fabric of our representative constitution. The Great Council of the Barons became the Parliament of the Realm. Every order of the state found itself represented in this assembly, and took part in the grant of supplies, the work of legislation, and in the end the control of government. But though in all essential points the character of Parliament has remained the same from that time to this, there were some remarkable particulars in which the assembly of 1295 differed widely from the present Parliament at St. Stephen's. Some of these differences, such as those which sprang from the increased powers and changed relations of the

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different orders among themselves, we shall have occasion to consider at a later time. But a difference of a far more startling kind than these lay in the presence of the clergy. If there is any part in the parliamentary scheme of Edward the First which can be regarded as especially his own, it is his project for the representation of the ecclesiastical order. The King had twice at least summoned its "proctors" to Great Councils before 1295, but it was then only that the complete representation of the Church was definitely organized by the insertion of a clause in the writ which summoned a bishop to Parliament requiring the personal attendance of all archdeacons, deans, or priors of cathedral churches, of a proctor for each cathedral chapter, and two for the clergy within his diocese. The clause is repeated in the writs of the present day, but its practical effect was foiled almost from the first by the resolute opposition of those to whom it was addressed. What the towns failed in doing the clergy actually did. Even when forced to comply with the royal summons, as they seem to have been forced during Edward's reign, they sat jealously by themselves, and their refusal to vote supplies in any but their own provincial assemblies, or convocations, of Canterbury and York left the Crown without a motive for insisting on their continued attendance. Their presence indeed, though still at times granted on some solemn occasions, became so pure a formality that by the end of the fifteenth century it had sunk wholly into desuetude. In their anxiety to preserve their existence as an isolated and privileged order the clergy flung away a power which, had they retained it, would have ruinously hampered the healthy developement of the state. To take a single instance, it is difficult to see how the great changes of the Reformation could have been brought about had a good half of the House of Commons consisted purely of churchmen, whose numbers would have been backed by the weight of their property as possessors of a third of the landed estates of the realm.

CHAP. IV. A hardly less important difference may be found in the gradual restriction of the meetings of Parliament to Westminster. The names of Edward's statutes remind us of its convocation at the most various quarters, at Winchester, Acton Burnell, Northampton. It was at a later time that Parliament became settled in the straggling village which had grown up in the marshy swamp of the Isle of Thorns beside the palace whose embattled pile towered over the Thames and the new West-minster which was still rising in Edward's day on the site of the older church of the Confessor. It is possible that, while contributing greatly to its constitutional importance, this settlement of the Parliament may have helped to throw into the background its character as a supreme court of appeal. The proclamation by which it was called together invited "all who had any grace to demand of the King in Parliament, or any plaint to make of matters which could not be redressed or determined by ordinary course of law, or who had been in any way aggrieved by any of the King's ministers or justices or sheriffs, or their bailiffs, or any other officer, or have been unduly assessed, rated, charged, or sur-charged to aids, subsidies, or taxes," to deliver their petitions to receivers who sat in the Great Hall of the Palace of Westminster. The petitions were forwarded to the King's Council, and it was probably the extension of the jurisdiction of that body and the rise of the Court of Chancery which reduced this ancient right of the subject to the formal election of "Triers of Petitions" at the opening of every new Parliament by the House of Lords, a usage which is still continued. But it must have been owing to some memory of the older custom that the subject always looked for redress against injuries from the Crown or its ministers to the Parliament of the realm.

Conquest
of
Scotland.

The subsidies granted by the Parliament of 1295 furnished the King with the means of warfare with both Scotland and France while they assured him of the

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minster.

sympathy of his people in the contest. But from the first the reluctance of Edward to enter on the double war was strongly marked. The refusal of the Scotch baronage to obey his summons had been followed on Balliol's part by two secret steps which made a struggle inevitable, by a request to Rome for absolution from his oath of fealty and by a treaty of alliance with Philip the Fair. As yet however no open breach had taken place, and while Edward in 1296 summoned his knighthood to meet him in the north he called a Parliament at Newcastle in the hope of bringing about an accommodation with the Scot King. But all thought of accommodation was roughly ended by the refusal of Balliol to attend the Parliament, by the rout of a small body of English troops, and by the Scotch investment of Carlisle. Taken as he was by surprise, Edward showed at once the vigour and rapidity of his temper. His army marched upon Berwick. The town was a rich and well-peopled one, and although a wooden stockade furnished its only rampart the serried ranks of citizens behind it gave little hope of an easy conquest. Their taunts indeed stung the King to the quick. As his engineers threw up rough entrenchments for the besieging army the burghers bade him wait till he won the town before he began digging round it. "Kynge Edward," they shouted, "waune thou havest Berwick, pike thee; waune thou havest geten, dike thee." But the stockade was stormed with the loss of a single knight, nearly eight thousand of the citizens were mown down in a ruthless carnage, and a handful of Flemish traders who held the town-hall stoutly against all assailants were burned alive in it. The massacre only ceased when a procession of priests bore the host to the King's presence, praying for mercy. Edward with a sudden and characteristic burst of tears called off his troops; but the town was ruined for ever, and the greatest merchant city of northern Britain sank from that time into a petty sea-port.

At Berwick Edward received Balliol's formal defiance.

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CHAP. IV. "Has the fool done this folly?" the King cried in haughty scorn; "if he will not come to us, we will come to him." Edward the First. The terrible slaughter however had done its work, and his march northward was a triumphal progress. Edinburgh, Stirling, and Perth opened their gates, Bruce joined the English army, and Balliol himself surrendered and passed without a blow from his throne to an English prison. No further punishment however was exacted from the prostrate realm. Edward simply treated it as a fief, and declared its forfeiture to be the legal consequence of Balliol's treason. It lapsed in fact to its suzerain; and its earls, barons, and gentry swore homage in Parliament at Berwick to Edward as their King. The sacred stone on which its older sovereigns had been installed, an oblong block of limestone which legend asserted to have been the pillow of Jacob as angels ascended and descended upon him, was removed from Scone and placed in Westminster by the shrine of the Confessor. It was enclosed by Edward's order in a stately seat, which became from that hour the coronation chair of English Kings. To the King himself the whole business must have seemed another and easier conquest of Wales, and the mercy and just government which had followed his first success followed his second also. The government of the new dependency was entrusted to John of Warenne, Earl of Surrey, at the head of an English Council of Regency. Pardon was freely extended to all who had resisted the invasion, and order and public peace were rigidly enforced.

Confirmation of the Charters.

But the triumph, rapid and complete as it was, had more than exhausted the aids granted by the Parliament. The treasury was utterly drained. The struggle indeed widened as every month went on; the costly fight with the French in Gascony called for supplies, while Edward was planning a yet costlier attack on northern France with the aid of Flanders. Need drove him on his return from Scotland in 1297 to measures of tyrannical extortion which seemed to recall the times of John. His first blow fell on

the Church. At the close of 1294 he had already demanded half their annual income from the clergy, and so terrible was his wrath at their resistance that the Dean of St. Paul's, who stood forth to remonstrate, dropped dead of sheer terror at his feet. "If any oppose the King's demand," said a royal envoy in the midst of the Convocation, "let him stand up that he may be noted as an enemy to the King's peace." The outraged Churchmen fell back on an untenable plea that their aid was due solely to Rome, and alleged the bull of "Clericis Laicos," issued by Boniface the Eighth at this moment, a bull which forbade the clergy to pay secular taxes from their ecclesiastical revenues, as a ground for refusing to comply with further taxation. In 1297 Archbishop Winchelsey refused on the ground of this bull to make any grant, and Edward met his refusal by a general outlawry of the whole order. The King's courts were closed, and all justice denied to those who refused the King aid. By their actual plea the clergy had put themselves formally in the wrong, and the outlawry soon forced them to submission; but their aid did little to recruit the exhausted treasury. The pressure of the war steadily increased, and far wider measures of arbitrary taxation were needful to equip an expedition which Edward prepared to lead in person to Flanders. The country gentlemen were compelled to take up knight-hood or to compound for exemption from the burthensome honour, and forced contributions of cattle and corn were demanded from the counties. Edward no doubt purposed to pay honestly for these supplies, but his exactions from the merchant class rested on a deliberate theory of his royal rights. He looked on the customs as levied absolutely at his pleasure, and the export duty on wool—now the staple produce of the country—was raised to six times its former amount. Although he infringed no positive provision of charter or statute in his action, it was plain that his course really undid all that had been gained by the Barons' war. But the blow had no sooner been struck than Edward found

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CHAP. IV. stout resistance within his realm. The barons drew together and called a meeting for the redress of their grievances. The two greatest of the English nobles, Humfrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, placed themselves at the head of the opposition. The first was Constable, the second Earl Marshal, and Edward bade them lead a force to Gascony as his lieutenants while he himself sailed to Flanders. Their departure would have left the Baronage without leaders, and the two earls availed themselves of a plea that they were not bound to foreign service save in attendance on the King to refuse obedience to the royal orders. "By God, Sir Earl," swore the King to the Earl Marshal, "you shall either go or hang!" "By God, Sir King," was the cool reply, "I will neither go nor hang!" Both parties separated in bitter anger; the King to seize fresh wool, to outlaw the clergy, and to call an army to his aid; the barons to gather in arms, backed by the excommunication of the Primate. But the strife went no further than words. Ere the Parliament he had convened could meet, Edward had discovered his own powerlessness; Winchelsey offered his mediation; and Edward confirmed the Great Charter and the Charter of Forests as the price of a grant from the clergy and a subsidy from the Commons. With one of those sudden revulsions of feeling of which his nature was capable the King stood before his people in Westminster Hall and owned with a burst of tears that he had taken their substance without due warrant of law. His passionate appeal to their loyalty wrested a reluctant assent to the prosecution of the war, and in August Edward sailed for Flanders, leaving his son regent of the realm. But the crisis had taught the need of further securities against the royal power, and as Edward was about to embark the barons demanded his acceptance of additional articles to the Charter, expressly renouncing his right of taxing the nation without its own consent. The King sailed without complying, but Winchelsey joined the two earls and the citizens of London in

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forbidding any levy of supplies till the Great Charter with these clauses was again confirmed, and the trouble in Scotland as well as the still pending strife with France left Edward helpless in the barons' hands. The Great Charter and the Charter of the Forests were solemnly confirmed by him at Ghent in November; and formal pardon was issued to the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk.

The confirmation of the Charter, the renunciation of any right to the exactions by which the people were aggrieved, the pledge that the King would no more take "such aids, tasks, and prizes but by common assent of the realm," the promise not to impose on wool any heavy customs or "mâletot" without the same assent, was the close of the great struggle which had begun at Runnymede. The clauses so soon removed from the Great Charter were now restored; and evade them as they might, the kings were never able to free themselves from the obligation to seek aid solely from the general consent of their subjects. It was Scotland which had won this victory for English freedom. At the moment when Edward and the earls stood face to face the King saw his work in the north suddenly undone. Both the justice and injustice of the new rule proved fatal to it. The wrath of the Scots, already kindled by the intrusion of English priests into Scotch livings and by the grant of lands across the border to English barons, was fanned to fury by the strict administration of law and the repression of feuds and cattle-lifting. The disbanding too of troops, which was caused by the penury of the royal exchequer, united with the licence of the soldiery who remained to quicken the national sense of wrong. The disgraceful submission of their leaders brought the people themselves to the front. In spite of a hundred years of peace the farmer of Fife or the Lowlands and the artizan of the towns remained stout-hearted Northumbrian Englishmen. They had never consented to Edward's supremacy, and their blood rose against the insolent rule of the stranger. The genius of

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*Revolt of
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CHAP. IV. an outlaw knight, William Wallace, saw in their smouldering discontent a hope of freedom for his country, and his daring raids on outlying parties of the English soldiery roused the country at last into revolt.

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Wallace.

Of Wallace himself, of his life or temper, we know little or nothing; the very traditions of his gigantic stature and enormous strength are dim and unhistorical. But the instinct of the Scotch people has guided it aright in choosing him for its national hero. He was the first to assert freedom as a national birthright, and amidst the despair of nobles and priests to call the people itself to arms. At the head of an army drawn principally from the coast districts north of the Tay, which were inhabited by a population of the same blood as that of the Lowlands, Wallace in September 1297 encamped near Stirling, the pass between the north and the south, and awaited the English advance. It was here that he was found by the English army. The offers of John of Warenne were scornfully rejected: "We have come," said the Scottish leader, "not to make peace, but to free our country." The position of Wallace behind a loop of Forth was in fact chosen with consummate skill. The one bridge which crossed the river was only broad enough to admit two horsemen abreast; and though the English army had been passing from daybreak but half its force was across at noon when Wallace closed on it and cut it after a short combat to pieces in sight of its comrades. The retreat of the Earl of Surrey over the border left Wallace head of the country he had freed, and for a few months he acted as "Guardian of the Realm" in Balliol's name, and headed a wild foray into Northumberland in which the barbarous cruelties of his men left a bitter hatred behind them which was to wreak its vengeance in the later bloodshed of the war. His reduction of Stirling Castle at last called Edward to the field. In the spring of 1298 the King's diplomacy had at last wrung a truce for two years from Philip the Fair; and he at once returned to England to

face the troubles in Scotland. Marching northward with a larger host than had ever followed his banner, he was enabled by treachery to surprize Wallace as he fell back to avoid an engagement, and to force him on the twenty-second of July to battle near Falkirk. The Scotch force consisted almost wholly of foot, and Wallace drew up his spearmen in four great hollow circles or squares, the outer ranks kneeling and the whole supported by bowmen within, while a small force of horse were drawn up as a reserve in the rear. It was the formation of Waterloo, the first appearance in our history since the day of Senlac of "that unconquerable British infantry" before which chivalry was destined to go down. For a moment it had all Waterloo's success. "I have brought you to the ring, hop (dance) if you can," are words of rough humour that reveal the very soul of the patriot leader, and the serried ranks answered well to his appeal. The Bishop of Durham who led the English van shrank wisely from the look of the squares. "Back to your mass, Bishop," shouted the reckless knights behind him, but the body of horse dashed itself vainly on the wall of spears. Terror spread through the English army, and its Welsh auxiliaries drew off in a body from the field. But the generalship of Wallace was met by that of the King. Drawing his bowmen to the front, Edward riddled the Scottish ranks with arrows and then hurled his cavalry afresh on the wavering line. In a moment all was over, the maddened knights rode in and out of the broken ranks, slaying without mercy. Thousands fell on the field, and Wallace himself escaped with difficulty, followed by a handful of men.

But ruined as the cause of freedom seemed, his work was done. He had roused Scotland into life, and even a defeat like Falkirk left her unconquered. Edward remained master only of the ground he stood on: want of supplies forced him at last to retreat; and in the summer of the following year, 1299, when Balliol, released from his English prison, withdrew into France, a regency of the

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Scotch nobles under Robert Bruce and John Comyn continued the struggle for independence. Troubles at home and danger from abroad stayed Edward's hand. The barons still distrusted his sincerity, and though at their demand he renewed the Confirmation in the spring of 1299, his attempt to add an evasive clause saving the right of the Crown proved the justice of their distrust. In spite of a fresh and unconditional renewal of it a strife over the Forest Charter went on till the opening of 1301 when a new gathering of the barons in arms with the support of Archbishop Winchelsey wrested from him its full execution. What aided freedom within was as of old the peril without. France was still menacing, and a claim advanced by Pope Boniface the Eighth at its suggestion to the feudal superiority over Scotland arrested a new advance of the King across the border. A quarrel however which broke out between Philip le Bel and the Papacy removed all obstacles. It enabled Edward to defy Boniface and to wring from France a treaty in which Scotland was abandoned. In 1304 he resumed the work of invasion, and again the nobles flung down their arms as he marched to the North. Comyn, at the head of the Regency, acknowledged his sovereignty, and the surrender of Stirling completed the conquest of Scotland. But the triumph of Edward was only the prelude to the carrying out of his designs for knitting the two countries together by a generosity and wisdom which reveal the greatness of his statesmanship. A general amnesty was extended to all who had shared in the resistance. Wallace, who refused to avail himself of Edward's mercy, was captured and condemned to death at Westminster on charges of treason, sacrilege, and robbery. The head of the great patriot, crowned in mockery with a circlet of laurel, was placed upon London Bridge. But the execution of Wallace was the one blot on Edward's clemency. With a masterly boldness he entrusted the government of the country to a council of Scotch nobles, many of whom were

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freshly pardoned for their share in the war, and anticipated the policy of Cromwell by allotting ten representatives to Scotland in the Common Parliament of his realm. A Convocation was summoned at Perth for the election of these representatives, and a great judicial scheme which was promulgated in this assembly adopted the amended laws of King David as the base of a new legislation, and divided the country for judicial purposes into four districts, Lothian, Galloway, the Highlands, and the land between the Highlands and the Forth, at the head of each of which were placed two justiciaries, the one English and the other Scotch.

With the conquest and settlement of Scotland the glory of Edward seemed again complete. The bitterness of his humiliation at home indeed still preyed upon him, and in measure after measure we see his purpose of renewing the strife with the baronage. In 1303 he found a means of evading his pledge to levy no new taxes on merchandize save by assent of the realm in a consent of the foreign merchants, whether procured by royal pressure or no, to purchase by stated payments certain privileges of trading. In this "New Custom" lay the origin of our import duties. A formal absolution from his promises which he obtained from Pope Clement the Fifth in 1305 showed that he looked on his triumph in the North as enabling him to reopen the questions which he had yielded. But again Scotland stayed his hand. Only four months had passed since its submission, and he was preparing for a joint Parliament of the two nations at Carlisle, when the conquered country suddenly sprang again to arms. Its new leader was Robert Bruce, a grandson of one of the original claimants of the crown. The Norman house of Bruce formed a part of the Yorkshire baronage, but it had acquired through intermarriages the Earldom of Carrick and the Lordship of Annandale. Both the claimant and his son had been pretty steadily on the English side in the contest with Balliol and Wallace,

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and Robert had himself been trained in the English court and stood high in the King's favour. But the withdrawal of Balliol gave a new force to his claims upon the crown, and the discovery of an intrigue which he had set on foot with the Bishop of St. Andrews so roused Edward's jealousy that Bruce fled for his life across the border. Early in 1306 he met Comyn, the Lord of Badenoch, to whose treachery he attributed the disclosure of his plans, in the church of the Grey Friars at Dumfries, and after the interchange of a few hot words struck him with his dagger to the ground. It was an outrage that admitted of no forgiveness, and Bruce for very safety was forced to assume the crown six weeks after in the Abbey of Scone. The news roused Scotland again to arms, and summoned Edward to a fresh contest with his unconquerable foe. But the murder of Comyn had changed the King's mood to a terrible pitilessness. He threatened death against all concerned in the outrage, and exposed the Countess of Buchan, who had set the crown on Bruce's head, in a cage or open chamber built for the purpose in one of the towers of Berwick. At the solemn feast which celebrated his son's knighthood Edward vowed on the swan which formed the chief dish at the banquet to devote the rest of his days to exact vengeance from the murderer himself. But even at the moment of the vow Bruce was already flying for his life to the western islands. "Henceforth" he said to his wife at their coronation "thou art Queen of Scotland and I King." "I fear" replied Mary Bruce "we are only playing at royalty like children in their games." The play was soon turned into bitter earnest. A small English force under Aymer de Valence sufficed to rout the disorderly levies which gathered round the new monarch, and the flight of Bruce left his followers at Edward's mercy. Noble after noble was sent to the block. The Earl of Athole pleaded kindred with royalty. "His only privilege," burst forth the King, "shall be that of being hanged on a higher gallows than the rest." Knights and priests were strung up side

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by side by the English justiciaries; while the wife and daughters of Robert Bruce were flung into Edward's prisons. Bruce himself had offered to capitulate to Prince Edward. But the offer only roused the old King to fury. "Who is so bold," he cried, "as to treat with our traitors without our knowledge?" and rising from his sick bed he led his army northwards in the summer of 1307 to complete the conquest. But the hand of death was upon him, and in the very sight of Scotland the old man breathed his last at Burgh-upon-sands.

BOOK IV.

THE PARLIAMENT.

1307—1461.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK IV.

For Edward the Second we have three important contemporaries: Thomas de la More, Trokelowe's Annals, and the life by a monk of Malmesbury printed by Hearne. The sympathies of the first are with the King, those of the last two with the Barons. Murimuth's short Chronicle is also contemporary. John Barbour's "Bruce," the great legendary storehouse for his hero's adventures, is historically worthless.

Important as it is, the reign of Edward the Third is by no means fortunate in its annalists. The concluding part of the Chronicle of Walter of Hemingford or Heminburgh seems to have been jotted down as news of the passing events reached its author: it ends at the battle of Crecy. Hearne has published another contemporary account, that of Robert of Avesbury, which closes in 1356. A third account by Knyghton, a canon of Leicester, will be found in the collection of Twysden. At the end of this century and the beginning of the next the annals which had been carried on in the Abbey of St. Albans were thrown together by Walsingham in the "*Historia Anglicana*" which bears his name, a compilation whose history may be found in the prefaces to the "*Chronica Monasterii S. Albani*" issued in the Rolls Series. An anonymous chronicler whose work is printed in the 22nd volume of the "*Archæologia*" has given us the story of the Good Parliament, another account is preserved in the "*Chronica Angliæ* from 1328 to 1388," published in the Rolls Series, and fresh light has been recently thrown on the time by the publication of a Chronicle by Adam of Usk which extends from 1377 to 1404. Fortunately the scantiness of historical narrative is compensated by the growing fulness and abundance of our Statepapers. Rymer's *Fœdera* is rich in diplomatic and other documents for this period, and from this time we have a storehouse of political and social information in the Parliamentary Rolls.

For the French war itself our primary authority is the Chronicle of Jehan le Bel, a canon of the church of St. Lambert of Liège, who himself served in Edward's campaign against the Scots and spent the rest of his life at the court of John of Hainault. Up to the Treaty of Bretigny, where it closes, Froissart has done little more than copy this work, making however large additions from his own enquiries, especially in the Flemish and Breton campaigns

and in the account of Crecy. Froissart was himself a Hainaulter of Valenciennes; he held a post in Queen Philippa's household from 1361 to 1369, and under this influence produced in 1373 the first edition of his well known Chronicle. A later edition is far less English in tone, and a third version, begun by him in his old age after long absence from England, is distinctly French in its sympathies. Froissart's vivacity and picturesqueness blind us to the inaccuracy of his details; as an historical authority he is of little value. The "Fasciculi Zizaniorum" in the Rolls Series with the documents appended to it is a work of primary authority for the history of Wyclif and his followers: a selection from his English tracts has been made by Mr. T. Arnold for the University of Oxford, which has also published his "Trias." The version of the Bible that bears his name has been edited with a valuable preface by the Rev. J. Forshall and Sir F. Madden. William Longland's poem, "The Complaint of Piers the Ploughman" (edited by Mr. Skeat for the Early English Text Society) throws a flood of light on the social state of England after the Treaty of Bretigny.

The "Annals of Richard the Second and Henry the Fourth," now published by the Master of the Rolls, are our main authority for the period which follows Edward's death. They serve as the basis of the St. Alban's compilation which bears the name of Walsingham, and from which the "Life of Richard," by a monk of Evesham is for the most part derived. The same violent Lancastrian sympathy runs through Walsingham and the fifth book of Knyghton's Chronicle. The French authorities on the other hand are vehemently on Richard's side. Froissart, who ends at this time, is supplemented by the metrical history of Creton ("Archæologia," vol. xx.), and by the "Chronique de la Traison et Mort de Richart" (English Historical Society), both works of French authors and published in France in the time of Henry the Fourth, probably with the aim of arousing French feeling against the House of Lancaster and the war-policy which it had revived. The popular feeling in England may be seen in "Political Songs from Edward III. to Richard III." (Rolls Series). A poem on "The Deposition of Richard II." which has been published by the Camden Society is now ascribed to William Longland.

With Henry the Fifth our historic materials become more abundant. We have the "Acta Henrici Quinti" by Titus Livius, a chaplain in the royal army; a life by Elmham, prior of Lenton, simpler in style but identical in arrangement and facts with the former work; a biography by Robert Redman; a metrical chronicle by Elmham (published in Rolls Series in "Memorials of Henry the Fifth"); and the meagre chronicles of Hardyng and Otterbourne. The King's Norman campaigns may be studied in M. Puisieux's "Siège de Rouen" (Caen, 1877). The "Wars of the English in France" and Blondel's work "De Reductione Normanniæ" (both in Rolls Series) give ample information on the military side of this and the next reign. But with the accession of Henry the Sixth we again enter on a period of singular dearth in its historical authorities. The "Procès de Jeanne d'Arc" (published by the Société de l'Histoire de France) is the only real authority for her history. For English affairs we are reduced to the meagre accounts of William of Worcester, of the

Continuator of the Crowland Chronicle, and of Fabyan. Fabyan is a London alderman with a strong bias in favour of the House of Lancaster, and his work is useful for London only. The Continuator is one of the best of his class; and though connected with the house of York, the date of his work, which appeared soon after Bosworth Field, makes him fairly impartial; but he is sketchy and deficient in information. The more copious narrative of Polydore Vergil is far superior to these in literary ability, but of later date, and strongly Lancastrian in tone. For the struggle between Edward and Warwick, the valuable narrative of "The Arrival of Edward the Fourth" (Camden Society) may be taken as the official account on the royal side. The Paston Letters are the first instance in English history of a family correspondence, and throw great light on the social condition of the time.

CHAPTER I.

EDWARD II.

1307—1327.

IN his calling together the estates of the realm Edward the First determined the course of English history. From the first moment of its appearance the Parliament became the centre of English affairs. The hundred years indeed which follow its assembly at Westminster saw its rise into a power which checked and overawed the Crown.

Parliament and the Kings.

Of the Kings in whose reigns the Parliament gathered this mighty strength not one was likely to look with indifference on the growth of a rival authority, and the bulk of them were men who in other times would have roughly checked it. What held their hand was the need of the Crown. The century and a half that followed the gathering of the estates at Westminster was a time of almost continual war, and of the financial pressure that springs from war. It was indeed war that had gathered them. In calling his Parliament Edward the First sought mainly an effective means of procuring supplies for that policy of national consolidation which had triumphed in Wales and which seemed to be triumphing in Scotland. But the triumph in Scotland soon proved a delusive one, and the strife brought wider strifes in its train. When Edward wrung from Balliol an acknowledgement of his suzerainty he foresaw little of the war with France, the war with Spain, the quarrel with the Papacy, the upgrowth of social, of political, of religious revolution within

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England itself, of which that acknowledgement was to be the prelude. But the thicker troubles gathered round England the more the royal treasury was drained, and now that arbitrary taxation was impossible the one means of filling it lay in a summons of the Houses. The Crown was chained to the Parliament by a tie of absolute need. From the first moment of parliamentary existence the life and power of the estates assembled at Westminster hung on the question of supplies. So long as war went on no ruler could dispense with the grants which fed the war and which Parliament alone could afford. But it was impossible to procure supplies save by redressing the grievances of which Parliament complained and by granting the powers which Parliament demanded. It was in vain that King after King, conscious that war bound them to the Parliament, strove to rid themselves of the war. So far was the ambition of our rulers from being the cause of the long struggle that, save in the one case of Henry the Fifth, the desperate effort of every ruler was to arrive at peace. Forced as they were to fight, their restless diplomacy strove to draw from victory as from defeat a means of escape from the strife that was enslaving the Crown. The royal Council, the royal favourites, were always on the side of peace. But fortunately for English freedom peace was impossible. The pride of the English people, the greed of France, foiled every attempt at accommodation. The wisest ministers sacrificed themselves in vain. King after King patched up truces which never grew into treaties, and concluded marriages which brought fresh discord instead of peace. War went ceaselessly on, and with the march of war went on the ceaseless growth of the Parliament.

Robert
Bruce.

The death of Edward the First arrested only for a moment the advance of his army to the north. The Earl of Pembroke led it across the border, and found himself master of the country without a blow. Bruce's career became that of a desperate adventurer, for even the

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Highland chiefs in whose fastnesses he found shelter were bitterly hostile to one who claimed to be King of their foes in the Lowlands. It was this adversity that transformed the murderer of Comyn into the noble leader of a nation's cause. Strong and of commanding presence, brave and genial in temper, Bruce bore the hardships of his career with a courage and hopefulness that never failed. In the legends that clustered round his name we see him listening in Highland glens to the bay of the bloodhounds on his track, or holding a pass single-handed against a crowd of savage clansmen. Sometimes the small band which clung to him were forced to support themselves by hunting and fishing, sometimes to break up for safety as their enemies tracked them to their lair. Bruce himself had more than once to fling off his coat-of-mail and scramble barefoot for very life up the crags. Little by little however the dark sky cleared. The English pressure relaxed. James Douglas, the darling of Scottish story, was the first of the Lowland Barons to rally to the Bruce, and his daring gave heart to the King's cause. Once he surprized his own house, which had been given to an Englishman, ate the dinner which was prepared for its new owner, slew his captives, and tossed their bodies on to a pile of wood at the castle gate. Then he staved in the wine-vats that the wine might mingle with their blood, and set house and wood-pile on fire.

A ferocity like this degraded everywhere the work of freedom; but the revival of the country went steadily on. Pembroke and the English forces were in fact paralyzed by a strife which had broken out in England between the new King and his baronage. The moral purpose which had raised his father to grandeur was wholly wanting in Edward the Second; he was showy, idle, and stubborn in temper; but he was far from being destitute of the intellectual quickness which seemed inborn in the Plantagenets. He had no love for his father, but he had seen him in the later years of his reign struggling

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against the pressure of the baronage, evading his pledges as to taxation, and procuring absolution from his promise to observe the clauses added to the Charter. The son's purpose was the same, that of throwing off what he looked on as the yoke of the baronage; but the means by which he designed to bring about his purpose was the choice of a minister wholly dependent on the Crown. We have already noticed the change by which the "clerks of the King's chapel," who had been the ministers of arbitrary government under the Norman and Angevin sovereigns, had been quietly superseded by the prelates and lords of the Continual Council. At the close of the late reign a direct demand on the part of the barons to nominate the great officers of state had been curtly rejected but the royal choice had been practically limited in the selection of its ministers to the class of prelates and nobles, and however closely connected with royalty they might be such officers always to a great extent shared the feelings and opinions of their order. The aim of the young King seems to have been to undo the change which had been silently brought about, and to imitate the policy of the contemporary sovereigns of France by choosing as his ministers men of an inferior position, wholly dependent on the Crown for their power, and representatives of nothing but the policy and interests of their master. Piers Gaveston, a foreigner sprung from a family of Guienne, had been his friend and companion during his father's reign, at the close of which he had been banished from the realm for his share in intrigues which divided Edward from his son. At the accession of the new king he was at once recalled, created Earl of Cornwall, and placed at the head of the administration. When Edward crossed the sea to wed Isabella of France, the daughter of Philip the Fair, a marriage planned by his father to provide against any further intervention of France in his difficulties with Scotland, the new minister was left as Regent in his room. The offence given by this rapid promotion was embittered by his personal temper. Gay,

genial, thriftless, Gaveston showed in his first acts the quickness and audacity of Southern Gaul. The older ministers were dismissed, all claims of precedence or inheritance were set aside in the distribution of offices at the coronation, while taunts and defiance goaded the proud baronage to fury. The favourite was a fine soldier, and his lance unhorsed his opponents in tourney after tourney. His reckless wit flung nicknames about the Court, the Earl of Lancaster was "the Actor," Pembroke "the Jew," Warwick "the Black Dog." But taunt and defiance broke helplessly against the iron mass of the baronage. After a few months of power the formal demand of the Parliament for his dismissal could not be resisted, and in May, 1308, Gaveston was formally banished from the realm.

But Edward was far from abandoning his favourite. In Ireland he was unfettered by the Baronage, and here Gaveston found a refuge as the King's Lieutenant while Edward sought to obtain his recall by the intervention of France and the Papacy. But the financial pressure of the Scotch war again brought the King and his Parliament together in the spring of 1309. It was only by conceding the rights which his father had sought to establish of imposing import duties on the merchants by their own assent that he procured a subsidy. The firmness of the baronage sprang from their having found a head. In no point had the policy of Henry the Third more utterly broken down than in his attempt to weaken the power of the nobles by filling the great earldoms with kinsmen of the royal house. He had made Simon of Montfort his brother-in-law only to furnish a leader to the nation in the Barons' war. In loading his second son, Edmund Crouchback, with honours and estates he raised a family to greatness which overawed the Crown. Edmund had been created Earl of Lancaster; after Evesham he had received the forfeited Earldom of Leicester; he had been made Earl of Derby on the extinction of the house of Ferrers. His son, Thomas of Lancaster, was

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the son-in-law of Henry de Lacy, and was soon to add to these lordships the Earldom of Lincoln. And to the weight of these great baronies was added his royal blood. The father of Thomas had been a titular King of Sicily. His mother was dowager Queen of Navarre. His half-sister by the mother's side was wife of the French King Philip le Bel and mother of the English Queen Isabella. He was himself a grandson of Henry the Third and not far from the succession to the throne. Had Earl Thomas been a wiser and a nobler man, his adhesion to the cause of the baronage might have guided the King into a really national policy. As it was his weight proved irresistible. When Edward at the close of the Parliament recalled Gaveston the Earl of Lancaster withdrew from the royal Council, and a Parliament which met in the spring of 1310 resolved that the affairs of the realm should be entrusted for a year to a body of twenty-one "Ordainers" with Archbishop Winchelsey at their head.

Edward
and the
Ordainers

Edward with Gaveston withdrew sullenly to the North. A triumph in Scotland would have given him strength to baffle the Ordainers, but he had little of his father's military skill, the wasted country made it hard to keep an army together, and after a fruitless campaign he fell back to his southern realm to meet the Parliament of 1311 and the "Ordinances" which the twenty-one laid before it. By this long and important statute Gaveston was banished, other advisers were driven from the Council, and the Florentine bankers whose loans had enabled Edward to hold the baronage at bay sent out of the realm. The customs duties imposed by Edward the First were declared to be illegal. Its administrative provisions showed the relations which the barons sought to establish between the new Parliament and the Crown. Parliaments were to be called every year, and in these assemblies the King's servants were to be brought, if need were, to justice. The great officers of state were to be appointed

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with the counsel and consent of the baronage, and to be sworn in Parliament. The same consent of the barons in Parliament was to be needful ere the King could declare war or absent himself from the realm. As the Ordinances show, the baronage still looked on Parliament rather as a political organization of the nobles than as a gathering of the three Estates of the realm. The lower clergy pass unnoticed; the Commons are regarded as mere taxpayers whose part was still confined to the presentation of petitions of grievances and the grant of money. But even in this imperfect fashion the Parliament was a real representation of the country. The barons no longer depended for their force on the rise of some active leader, or gathered in exceptional assemblies to wrest reforms from the Crown by threat of war. Their action was made regular and legal. Even if the Commons took little part in forming decisions, their force when formed hung on the assent of the knights and burgesses to them; and the grant which alone could purchase from the Crown the concessions which the Baronage demanded lay absolutely within the control of the Third Estate. It was this which made the King's struggles so fruitless. He assented to the Ordinances, and then withdrawing to the North recalled Gaveston and annulled them. But Winchelsey excommunicated the favourite and the barons, gathering in arms, besieged him in Scarborough. His surrender in May 1312 ended the strife. The "Black Dog" of Warwick had sworn that the favourite should feel his teeth; and Gaveston flung himself in vain at the feet of the Earl of Lancaster, praying for pity "from his gentle lord." In defiance of the terms of his capitulation he was beheaded on Blacklow Hill.

The King's burst of grief was as fruitless as his threats of vengeance; a feigned submission of the conquerors completed the royal humiliation, and the barons knelt before Edward in Westminster Hall to receive a pardon which seemed the deathblow of the royal power. But if

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Edward was powerless to conquer the baronage he could still by evading the observances of the Ordinances throw the whole realm into confusion. The two years that follow Gaveston's death are among the darkest in our history. A terrible succession of famines intensified the suffering which sprang from the utter absence of all rule as dissension raged between the barons and the King. At last a common peril drew both parties together. The Scots had profited by the English troubles, and Bruce's "harrying of Buchan" after his defeat of its Earl, who had joined the English army, fairly turned the tide of success in his favour. Edinburgh, Roxburgh, Perth, and most of the Scotch fortresses fell one by one into King Robert's hands. The clergy met in council and owned him as their lawful lord. Gradually the Scotch barons who still held to the English cause were coerced into submission, and Bruce found himself strong enough to invest Stirling, the last and the most important of the Scotch fortresses which held out for Edward. Stirling was in fact the key of Scotland, and its danger roused England out of its civil strife to an effort for the recovery of its prey. At the close of 1313 Edward recognized the Ordinances, and a liberal grant from the Parliament enabled him to take the field. Lancaster indeed still held aloof on the ground that the King had not sought the assent of Parliament to the war, but thirty thousand men followed Edward to the North, and a host of wild marauders were summoned from Ireland and Wales. The army which Bruce gathered to oppose this inroad was formed almost wholly of footmen, and was stationed to the south of Stirling on a rising ground flanked by a little brook, the Bannockburn, which gave its name to the engagement. The battle took place on the twenty-fourth of June 1314. Again two systems of warfare were brought face to face as they had been brought at Falkirk, for Robert like Wallace drew up his forces in hollow squares or circles of spearmen. The English were dispirited at the very outset by the failure of an attempt

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to relieve Stirling and by the issue of a single combat between Bruce and Henry de Bohun, a knight who bore down upon him as he was riding peacefully along the front of his army. Robert was mounted on a small hackney and held only a light battle-axe in his hand, but warding off his opponent's spear he cleft his skull with so terrible a blow that the handle of his axe was shattered in his grasp. At the opening of the battle the English archers were thrown forward to rake the Scottish squares, but they were without support and were easily dispersed by a handful of horse whom Bruce held in reserve for the purpose. The body of men-at-arms next flung themselves on the Scottish front, but their charge was embarrassed by the narrow space along which the line was forced to move, and the steady resistance of the squares soon threw the knighthood into disorder. "The horses that were stickit," says an exulting Scotch writer, "rushed and reeled right rudely." In the moment of failure the sight of a body of camp-followers, whom they mistook for reinforcements to the enemy, spread panic through the English host. It broke in a headlong rout. Its thousands of brilliant horsemen were soon floundering in pits which guarded the level ground to Bruce's left, or riding in wild haste for the border. Few however were fortunate enough to reach it. Edward himself, with a body of five hundred knights, succeeded in escaping to Dunbar and the sea. But the flower of his knighthood fell into the hands of the victors, while the Irishry and the footmen were ruthlessly cut down by the country folk as they fled. For centuries to come the rich plunder of the English camp left its traces on the treasure-rolls and the vestment-rolls of castle and abbey throughout the Lowlands.

Bannockburn left Bruce the master of Scotland: but terrible as the blow was England could not humble herself to relinquish her claim on the Scottish crown. Edward was eager indeed for a truce, but with equal firmness

*Fall of
Lancaster*

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Bruce refused all negotiation while the royal title was withheld from him and steadily pushed on the recovery of his southern dominions. His progress was unhindered. Bannockburn left Edward powerless, and Lancaster at the head of the Ordainers became supreme. But it was still impossible to trust the King or to act with him, and in the dead-lock of both parties the Scots plundered as they would. Their ravages in the North brought shame on England such as it had never known. At last Bruce's capture of Berwick in the spring of 1318 forced the King to give way. The Ordinances were formally accepted, an amnesty granted, and a small number of peers belonging to the barons' party added to the great officers of state. Had a statesman been at the head of the baronage the weakness of Edward might have now been turned to good purpose. But the character of the Earl of Lancaster seems to have fallen far beneath the greatness of his position. Distrustful of his cousin, yet himself incapable of governing, he stood sullenly aloof from the royal Council and the royal armies, and Edward was able to lay his failure in recovering Berwick during the campaign of 1319 to the Earl's charge. His influence over the country was sensibly weakened; and in this weakness the new advisers on whom the King was leaning saw a hope of destroying his power. These were a younger and elder Hugh Le Despenser, son and grandson of the Justiciar who had fallen beside Earl Simon at Evesham. Greedy and ambitious as they may have been, they were able men, and their policy was of a higher stamp than the wilful defiance of Gaveston. It lay, if we may gather it from the faint indications which remain, in a frank recognition of the power of the three Estates as opposed to the separate action of the baronage. The rise of the younger Hugh, on whom the King bestowed the county of Glamorgan with the hand of one of its coheiresses, a daughter of Earl Gilbert of Gloucester, was rapid enough to excite general jealousy; and in 1321 Lancaster found little difficulty in extorting by force of

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arms his exile from the kingdom. But the tide of popular sympathy was already wavering, and it was turned to the royal cause by an insult offered to the Queen, against whom Lady Badlesmere closed the doors of Ledes Castle. The unexpected energy shown by Edward in avenging this insult gave fresh strength to his cause. At the opening of 1322 he found himself strong enough to recall Despenser, and when Lancaster convoked the baronage to force him again into exile the weakness of their party was shown by some negotiations into which the Earl entered with the Scots and by his precipitate retreat to the north on the advance of the royal army. At Boroughbridge his forces were arrested and dispersed, and Thomas himself, brought captive before Edward at Pontefract, was tried and condemned to death as a traitor. "Have mercy on me, King of Heaven," cried Lancaster, as, mounted on a grey pony without a bridle, he was hurried to execution, "for my earthly King has forsaken me." His death was followed by that of a number of his adherents and by the captivity of others; while a Parliament at York annulled the proceedings against the Despensers and repealed the Ordinances.

It is to this Parliament however, and perhaps to the victorious confidence of the royalists, that we owe the famous provision which reveals the policy of the Despensers, the provision that all laws concerning "the estate of our Lord the King and his heirs or for the estate of the realm and the people shall be treated, accorded, and established in Parliaments by our Lord the King and by the consent of the prelates, earls, barons, and commonalty of the realm according as hath been hitherto accustomed." It would seem from the tenor of this remarkable enactment that much of the sudden revulsion of popular feeling had been owing to the assumption of all legislative action by the baronage alone. The same policy was seen in a reissue in the form of a royal Ordinance of some of the most beneficial provisions of the Ordinances which had been

*The Des-
pensers.*

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formally repealed. But the arrogance of the Despensers gave new offence; and the utter failure of a fresh campaign against Scotland again weakened the Crown. The barbarous forays in which the borderers under Earl Douglas were wasting Northumberland woke a general indignation; and a grant from the Parliament at York enabled Edward to march with a great army to the North. But Bruce as of old declined an engagement till the wasted Lowlands starved the invaders into a ruinous retreat. The failure forced England in the spring of 1323 to stoop to a truce for thirteen years, in the negotiation of which Bruce was suffered to take the royal title. We see in this act of the Despensers the first of a series of such attempts by which minister after minister strove to free the Crown from the bondage under which the war-pressure laid it to the growing power of Parliament; but it ended as these after attempts ended only in the ruin of the counsellors who planned it. The pride of the country had been roused by the struggle, and the humiliation of such a truce robbed the Crown of its temporary popularity. It led the way to the sudden catastrophe which closed this disastrous reign.

Isabella. In his struggle with the Scots Edward, like his father, had been hampered not only by internal divisions but by the harassing intervention of France. The rising under Bruce had been backed by French aid as well as by a revival of the old quarrel over Guienne, and on the accession of Charles the Fourth in 1322 a demand of homage for Ponthieu and Gascony called Edward over sea. But the Despensers dared not let him quit the realm, and a fresh dispute as to the right of possession in the Agenois brought about the seizure of the bulk of Gascony by a sudden attack on the part of the French. The quarrel verged upon open war, and to close it Edward's Queen, Isabella, a sister of the French King, undertook in 1325 to revisit her home and bring about a treaty of peace between the two countries.

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Isabella hated the Despensers; she was alienated from her husband; but hatred and alienation were as yet jealously concealed. At the close of the year the terms of peace seemed to be arranged; and though declining to cross the sea, Edward evaded the difficulty created by the demand for personal homage by investing his son with the Duchies of Aquitaine and Gascony, and despatching him to join his mother at Paris. The boy did homage to King Charles for the two Duchies, the question of the Agenois being reserved for legal decision, and Edward at once recalled his wife and son to England. Neither threats nor prayers however could induce either wife or child to return to his court. Roger Mortimer, the most powerful of the Marcher barons and a deadly foe to the Despensers, had taken refuge in France; and his influence over the Queen made her the centre of a vast conspiracy. With the young Edward in her hands she was able to procure soldiers from the Count of Hainault by promising her son's hand to his daughter; the Italian bankers supplied funds; and after a year's preparation the Queen set sail in the autumn of 1326. A secret conspiracy of the baronage was revealed when the primate and nobles hurried to her standard on her landing at Orwell. Deserted by all and repulsed by the citizens of London whose aid he implored, the King fled hastily to the west and embarked with the Despensers for Lundy Island, which Despenser had fortified as a possible refuge; but contrary winds flung him again on the Welsh coast, where he fell into the hands of Earl Henry of Lancaster, the brother of the Earl whom they had slain. The younger Despenser, who accompanied him, was at once hung on a gibbet fifty feet high, and the King placed in ward at Kenilworth till his fate could be decided by a Parliament summoned for that purpose at Westminster in January 1327.

The peers who assembled fearlessly revived the constitutional usage of the earlier English freedom, and

*Deposition of
Edward.*

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asserted their right to depose a King who had proved himself unworthy to rule. Not a voice was raised in Edward's behalf, and only four prelates protested when the young Prince was proclaimed King by acclamation and presented as their sovereign to the multitudes without. The revolution took legal form in a bill which charged the captive monarch with indolence, incapacity, the loss of Scotland, the violation of his coronation oath and oppression of the Church and baronage; and on the approval of this it was resolved that the reign of Edward of Caernarvon had ceased and that the crown had passed to his son, Edward of Windsor. A deputation of the Parliament proceeded to Kenilworth to procure the assent of the discrowned King to his own deposition, and Edward "clad in a plain black gown" bowed quietly to his fate. Sir William Trussel at once addressed him in words which better than any other mark the nature of the step which the Parliament had taken. "I, William Trussel, proctor of the earls, barons, and others, having for this full and sufficient power, do render and give back to you, Edward, once King of England, the homage and fealty of the persons named in my procuracy; and acquit and discharge them thereof in the best manner that law and custom will give. And I now make protestation in their name that they will no longer be in your fealty and allegiance, nor claim to hold anything of you as king, but will account you hereafter as a private person, without any manner of royal dignity." A significant act followed these emphatic words. Sir Thomas Blount, the steward of the household, broke his staff of office, a ceremony used only at a king's death, and declared that all persons engaged in the royal service were discharged. The act of Blount was only an omen of the fate which awaited the miserable King. In the following September he was murdered in Berkeley Castle.

CHAPTER II.

EDWARD THE THIRD.

1327—1347.

THE deposition of Edward the Second proclaimed to the world the power which the English Parliament had gained. In thirty years from their first assembly at Westminster the Estates had wrested from the Crown the last relic of arbitrary taxation, had forced on it new ministers and a new system of government, had claimed a right of confirming the choice of its councillors and of punishing their misconduct, and had established the principle that redress of grievances precedes a grant of supply. Nor had the time been less important in the internal growth of Parliament. Step by step the practical sense of the Houses themselves completed the work of Edward by bringing about change after change in its composition. The very division into a House of Lords and a House of Commons formed no part of the original plan of Edward the First; in the earlier Parliaments each of the four orders of clergy, barons, knights, and burgesses met, deliberated, and made their grants apart from each other. This isolation however of the Estates soon showed signs of breaking down. Though the clergy held steadily aloof from any real union with its fellow-orders, the knights of the shire were drawn by the similarity of their social position into a close connexion with the lords. They seem in fact to have been soon admitted by the baronage

*Estate of
the
Commons.*

CHAP. II. to an almost equal position with themselves, whether as
 Edward legislators or counsellors of the Crown. The burgesses on
 the Third. the other hand took little part at first in Parliamentary
 1327- proceedings, save in those which related to the taxation
 1347. of their class. But their position was raised by the strifes
 of the reign of Edward the Second when their aid was
 needed by the baronage in its struggle with the Crown ;
 and their right to share fully in all legislative action was
 asserted in the statute of 1322. From this moment no
 proceedings can have been considered as formally legislative
 save those conducted in full Parliament of all the estates.
 In subjects of public policy however the barons were still
 regarded as the sole advisers of the Crown, though the
 knights of the shire were sometimes consulted with them.
 But the barons and knighthood were not fated to be drawn
 into a single body whose weight would have given an
 aristocratic impress to the constitution. Gradually, through
 causes with which we are imperfectly acquainted, the knights
 of the shire drifted from their older connexion with the
 baronage into so close and intimate a union with the
 representatives of the towns that at the opening of the
 reign of Edward the Third the two orders are found
 grouped formally together, under the name of "The
 Commons." It is difficult to over-estimate the importance
 of this change. Had Parliament remained broken up into
 its four orders of clergy, barons, knights, and citizens, its
 power would have been neutralized at every great crisis by
 the jealousies and difficulty of co-operation among its
 component parts. A permanent union of the knighthood
 and the baronage on the other hand would have converted
 Parliament into the mere representative of an aristocratic
 caste, and would have robbed it of the strength which it
 has drawn from its connexion with the great body of the
 commercial classes. The new attitude of the knighthood,
 their social connexion as landed gentry with the baronage,
 their political union with the burgesses, really welded the
 three orders into one, and gave that unity of feeling and

action to our Parliament on which its power has ever
 since mainly depended.

The weight of the two Houses was seen in their settle-
 ment of the new government by the nomination of a
 Council with Earl Henry of Lancaster at its head. The
 Council had at once to meet fresh difficulties in the North.
 The truce so recently made ceased legally with Edward's
 deposition ; and the withdrawal of his royal title in further
 offers of peace warned Bruce of the new temper of the
 English rulers. Troops gathered on either side, and the
 English Council sought to pave the way for an attack
 by dividing Scotland against itself. Edward Balliol, a
 son of the former King John, was solemnly received as a
 vassal-king of Scotland at the English court. Robert
 was disabled by leprosy from taking the field in person,
 but the insult roused him to hurl his marauders again
 over the border under Douglas and Sir Thomas Randolph.
 The Scotch army has been painted for us by an eye-
 witness whose description is embodied in the work of
 Jehan le Bel. "It consisted of four thousand men-at-
 arms, knights, and esquires, well mounted, besides twenty
 thousand men bold and hardy, armed after the manner of
 their country, and mounted upon little hackneys that are
 never tied up or dressed, but turned immediately after the
 day's march to pasture on the heath or in the fields. . .
 They bring no carriages with them on account of the
 mountains they have to pass in Northumberland, neither
 do they carry with them any provisions of bread or wine,
 for their habits of sobriety are such in time of war that
 they will live for a long time on flesh half-sodden without
 bread, and drink the river water without wine. They
 have therefore no occasion for pots or pans, for they
 dress the flesh of the cattle in their skins after they have
 flayed them, and being sure to find plenty of them in
 the country which they invade they carry none with
 them. Under the flaps of his saddle each man carries a
 broad piece of metal, behind him a little bag of oatmeal :

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the Third.1327-
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when they have eaten too much of the sodden flesh and their stomach appears weak and empty, they set this plate over the fire, knead the meal with water, and when the plate is hot put a little of the paste upon it in a thin cake like a biscuit, which they eat to warm their stomachs. It is therefore no wonder that they perform a longer day's march than other soldiers." Though twenty thousand horsemen and forty thousand foot marched under their boy-king to protect the border, the English troops were utterly helpless against such a foe as this. At one time the whole army lost its way in the border wastes; at another all traces of the enemy disappeared, and an offer of knighthood and a hundred marks was made to any who could tell where the Scots were encamped. But when they were found their position behind the Wear proved unassailable, and after a bold sally on the English camp Douglas foiled an attempt at intercepting him by a clever retreat. The English levies broke hopelessly up, and a fresh foray into Northumberland forced the English Court in 1328 to submit to peace. By the treaty of Northampton which was solemnly confirmed by Parliament in September the independence of Scotland was recognized, and Robert Bruce owned as its King. Edward formally abandoned his claim of feudal superiority over Scotland; while Bruce promised to make compensation for the damage done in the North, to marry his son David to Edward's sister Joan, and to restore their forfeited estates to those nobles who had sided with the English King.

*Fall of
Mortimer.*

But the pride of England had been too much roused by the struggle with the Scots to bear this defeat easily, and the first result of the treaty of Northampton was the overthrow of the government which concluded it. This result was hastened by the pride of Roger Mortimer, who was now created Earl of March, and who had made himself supreme through his influence over Isabella and his exclusion of the rest of the nobles from all practical

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Edward
the Third.
1327-
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share in the administration of the realm. The first efforts to shake Roger's power were unsuccessful. The Earl of Lancaster stood, like his brother, at the head of the baronage; the parliamentary settlement at Edward's accession had placed him first in the royal Council; and it was to him that the task of defying Mortimer naturally fell. At the close of 1328 therefore Earl Henry formed a league with the Archbishop of Canterbury and with the young King's uncles, the Earls of Norfolk and Kent, to bring Mortimer to account for the peace with Scotland and the usurpation of the government as well as for the late King's murder, a murder which had been the work of his private partizans and which had profoundly shocked the general conscience. But the young King clung firmly to his mother, the Earls of Norfolk and Kent deserted to Mortimer, and powerful as it seemed the league broke up without result. A feeling of insecurity however spurred the Earl of March to a bold stroke at his opponents. The Earl of Kent, who was persuaded that his brother, Edward the Second, still lived a prisoner in Corfe Castle, was arrested on a charge of conspiracy to restore him to the throne, tried before a Parliament filled with Mortimer's adherents, and sent to the block. But the death of a prince of the royal blood roused the young King to resentment at the greed and arrogance of a minister who treated Edward himself as little more than a state-prisoner. A few months after his uncle's execution the King entered the Council chamber in Nottingham Castle with a force which he had introduced through a secret passage in the rock on which it stands, and arrested Mortimer with his own hands. A Parliament which was at once summoned condemned the Earl of March to a traitor's death, and in November 1330 he was beheaded at Tyburn, while the Queen-mother was sent for the rest of her life into confinement at Castle Rising.

Young as he was, and he had only reached his

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Edward
the Third.1327-
1347.Edward
and
France.

eighteenth year, Edward at once assumed the control of affairs. His first care was to restore good order throughout the country, which under the late government had fallen into ruin, and to free his hands by a peace with France for further enterprizes in the North. A formal peace had been concluded by Isabella after her husband's fall; but the death of Charles the Fourth soon brought about new jealousies between the two courts. The three sons of Philip the Fair had followed him on the throne in succession, but all had now died without male issue, and Isabella, as Philip's daughter, claimed the crown for her son. The claim in any case was a hard one to make out. Though her brothers had left no sons, they had left daughters, and if female succession were admitted these daughters of Philip's sons would precede a son of Philip's daughter. Isabella met this difficulty by a contention that though females could transmit the right of succession they could not themselves possess it, and that her son, as the nearest living male descendant of Philip the Fair, and born in the lifetime of the King from whom he claimed, could claim in preference to females who were related to Philip in as near a degree. But the bulk of French jurists asserted that only male succession gave right to the French throne. On such a theory the right inheritable from Philip the Fair was exhausted; and the crown passed to the son of Philip's younger brother, Charles of Valois, who in fact peacefully mounted the throne as Philip the Fifth. Purely formal as the claim which Isabella advanced seems to have been, it revived the irritation between the two courts, and though Edward's obedience to a summons which Philip addressed to him to do homage for Aquitaine brought about an agreement that both parties should restore the gains they had made since the last treaty the agreement was never carried out. Fresh threats of war ended in the conclusion of a new treaty of peace, but the question whether liege or simple homage was due for the duchies remained unsettled when the fall of Mortimer gave the

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the Third.1327-
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young King full mastery of affairs. His action was rapid and decisive. Clad as a merchant, and with but fifteen horsemen at his back, Edward suddenly made his appearance in 1331 at the French court and did homage as fully as Philip required. The question of the Agenois remained unsettled, though the English Parliament insisted that its decision should rest with negotiation and not with war, but on all other points a complete peace was made; and the young King rode back with his hands free for an attack which he was planning on the North.

The provisions of the Treaty of Northampton for the restitution of estates had never been fully carried out. Till this was done the English court held that the rights of feudal superiority over Scotland which it had yielded in the treaty remained in force; and at this moment an opening seemed to present itself for again asserting these rights with success. Fortune seemed at last to have veered to the English side. The death of Robert Bruce only a year after the Treaty of Northampton left the Scottish throne to his son David, a child of but eight years old. The death of the King was followed by the loss of Randolph and Douglas; and the internal difficulties of the realm broke out in civil strife. To the great barons on either side the border the late peace involved serious losses, for many of the Scotch houses held large estates in England as many of the English lords held large estates in Scotland, and although the treaty had provided for their claims they had in each case been practically set aside. It is this discontent of the barons at the new settlement which explains the sudden success of Edward Balliol in a snatch which he made at the Scottish throne. Balliol's design was known at the English court, where he had found shelter for some years; and Edward, whether sincerely or no, forbade his barons from joining him and posted troops on the border to hinder his crossing it. But Balliol found little difficulty in making his attack by sea. He sailed from England at the head of a body of nobles who claimed

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the Third.
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estates in the north, landed in August 1332 on the shores of Fife, and after repulsing with immense loss an army which attacked him near Perth was crowned at Scone two months after his landing, while David Bruce fled helplessly to France. Edward had given no open aid to this enterprise, but the crisis tempted his ambition, and he demanded and obtained from Balliol an acknowledgement of the English suzerainty. The acknowledgement however was fatal to Balliol himself. Surprized at Annan by a party of Scottish nobles, their sudden attack drove him in December over the border after a reign of but five months; and Berwick, which he had agreed to surrender to Edward, was strongly garrisoned against an English attack. The sudden breakdown of his vassal-king left Edward face to face with a new Scotch war. The Parliament which he summoned to advise on the enforcement of his claim showed no wish to plunge again into the contest and met him only with evasions and delays. But Edward had gone too far to withdraw. In March 1333 he appeared before Berwick, and besieged the town. A Scotch army under the regent, Sir Archibald Douglas, brother to the famous Sir James, advanced to its relief in July and attacked a covering force which was encamped on the strong position of Halidon Hill. The English bowmen however vindicated the fame they had first won at Falkirk and were soon to crown in the victory of Crecy. The Scotch only struggled through the marsh which covered the English front to be riddled with a storm of arrows and to break in utter rout. The battle decided the fate of Berwick. From that time the town has remained English territory. It was in fact the one part of Edward's conquests which was preserved in the end by the English crown. But fragment as it was, it was always viewed legally as representing the realm of which it once formed a part. As Scotland, it had its chancellor, chamberlain, and other officers of State: and the peculiar heading of Acts of Parliament enacted for England "and the town of

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the Third.
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Berwick-upon-Tweed" still preserves the memory of its peculiar position. But the victory did more than give Berwick to England. The defeat of Douglas was followed by the submission of a large part of the Scotch nobles, by the flight of the boy-king David, and by the return of Balliol unopposed to the throne. Edward exacted a heavy price for his aid. All Scotland south of the Firth of Forth was ceded to England, and Balliol did homage as vassal-king for the rest.

It was at the moment of this submission that the young King reached the climax of his success. A king at fourteen, a father at seventeen, he had carried out at eighteen a political revolution in the overthrow of Mortimer, and restored at twenty-two the ruined work of his grandfather. The northern frontier was carried to its old line under the Northumbrian kings. His kingdom within was peaceful and orderly; and the strife with France seemed at an end. During the next three years Edward persisted in the line of policy he had adopted, retaining his hold over Southern Scotland, aiding his sub-king Balliol in campaign after campaign against the despairing efforts of the nobles who still adhered to the house of Bruce, a party who were now headed by Robert the Steward of Scotland and by Earl Randolph of Moray. His perseverance was all but crowned with success, when Scotland was again saved by the intervention of France. The successes of Edward roused anew the jealousy of the French court. David Bruce found a refuge with Philip; French ships appeared off the Scotch coast and brought aid to the patriot nobles; and the old legal questions about the Agenois and Aquitaine were mooted afresh by the French council. For a time Edward staved off the contest by repeated embassies; but his refusal to accept Philip as a mediator between England and the Scots stirred France to threats of war. In 1335 fleets gathered on its coast; descents were made on the English shores; and troops and galleys were hired in Italy and the north for an invasion

Scotland
freed.

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of England. The mere threat of war saved Scotland. Edward's forces there were drawn to the south to meet the looked for attack from across the Channel; and the patriot party freed from their pressure at once drew together again. The actual declaration of war against France at the close of 1337 was the knell of Balliol's greatness; he found himself without an adherent and withdrew two years later to the court of Edward, while David returned to his kingdom in 1342 and won back the chief fastnesses of the Lowlands. From that moment the freedom of Scotland was secured. From a war of conquest and patriotic resistance the struggle died into a petty strife between two angry neighbours, which became a mere episode in the larger contest which it had stirred between England and France.

*The
Hundred
Years'
War.*

Whether in its national or in its European bearings it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of the contest which was now to open between these two nations. To England it brought a social, a religious, and in the end a political revolution. The Peasant Revolt, Lollardry, and the New Monarchy were direct issues of the Hundred Years' War. With it began the military renown of England; with it opened her struggle for the mastery of the seas. The pride begotten by great victories and a sudden revelation of warlike prowess roused the country not only to a new ambition, a new resolve to assert itself as a European power, but to a repudiation of the claims of the Papacy and an assertion of the ecclesiastical independence both of Church and Crown which paved the way for and gave its ultimate form to the English Reformation. The peculiar shape which English warfare assumed, the triumph of the yeoman and archer over noble and knight, gave new force to the political advance of the Commons. On the other hand the misery of the war produced the first great open feud between labour and capital. The glory of Crécy or Poitiers was dearly bought by the upgrowth of English pauperism. The warlike temper nursed

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on foreign fields begot at home a new turbulence and scorn of law, woke a new feudal spirit in the baronage, and sowed in the revolution which placed a new house on the throne the seeds of that fatal strife over the succession which troubled England to the days of Elizabeth. Nor was the contest of less import in the history of France. If it struck her for the moment from her height of pride, it raised her in the end to the front rank among the states of Europe. It carried her boundaries to the Rhone and the Pyrenees. It wrecked alike the feudal power of her *noblesse* and the hopes of constitutional liberty which might have sprung from the emancipation of the peasant or the action of the burgher. It founded a royal despotism which reached its height in Richelieu and finally plunged France into the gulf of the Revolution.

*The
Imperial
Alliance.*

Of these mighty issues little could be foreseen at the moment when Philip and Edward declared war. But from the very first the war took European dimensions. The young King saw clearly the greater strength of France. The weakness of the Empire, the captivity of the Papacy at Avignon, left her without a rival among European powers. The French chivalry was the envy of the world, and its military fame had just been heightened by a victory over the Flemish communes at Cassel. In numbers, in wealth, the French people far surpassed their neighbours over the Channel. England can hardly have counted more than four millions of inhabitants, France boasted of twenty. The clinging of our kings to their foreign dominions is explained by the fact that their subjects in Gascony, Aquitaine, and Poitou must have equalled in number their subjects in England. There was the same disproportion in the wealth of the two countries and, as men held then, in their military resources. Edward could bring only eight thousand men-at-arms to the field. Philip, while a third of his force was busy elsewhere, could appear at the head of forty thousand. Of the revolution in warfare which was to

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reverse this superiority, to make the footman rather than the horseman the strength of an army, the world and even the English King, in spite of Falkirk and Halidon, as yet recked little. Edward's whole energy was bent on meeting the strength of France by a coalition of powers against her, and his plans were helped by the dread which the great feudatories of the empire who lay nearest to him, the Duke of Brabant, the Counts of Hainault and Gelders, the Markgrave of Juliers, felt of French annexation. They listened willingly enough to his offers. Sixty thousand crowns purchased the alliance of Brabant. Lesser subsidies bought that of the two counts and the Markgrave. The King's work was helped indeed by his domestic relations. The Count of Hainault was Edward's father-in-law; he was also the father-in-law of the Count of Gelders. But the marriage of a third of the Count's daughters brought the English King a more important ally. She was wedded to the Emperor, Lewis of Bavaria, and the connexion that thus existed between the English and Imperial Courts facilitated the negotiations which ended in a formal alliance.

*Its
Relation
to the
Papacy.*

But the league had a more solid ground. The Emperor, like Edward, had his strife with France. His strife sprang from the new position of the Papacy. The removal of the Popes to Avignon which followed on the quarrel of Boniface the Eighth with Philip le Bel and the subjection to the French court which resulted from it affected the whole state of European politics. In the ever-recurring contest between the Papacy and the Empire France had of old been the lieutenant of the Roman See. But with the settlement at Avignon the relation changed, and the Pope became the lieutenant of France. Instead of the Papacy using the French Kings in its war of ideas against the Empire the French Kings used the Papacy as an instrument in their political rivalry with the Emperors. But if the position of the Pope drew Lewis to the side of England, it had much to do with drawing Edward to the side of

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Lewis. It was this that made the alliance, fruitless as it proved in a military sense, so memorable in its religious results. Hitherto England had been mainly on the side of the Popes in their strife against the Emperors. Now that the Pope had become a tool in the hands of a power which was to be its great enemy, the country was driven to close alliances with the Empire and to an ever-growing alienation from the Roman See. In Scotch affairs the hostility of the Popes had been steady and vexatious ever since Edward the First's time, and from the moment that this fresh struggle commenced they again showed their French partizanship. When Lewis made a last appeal for peace, Philip of Valois made Benedict XII. lay down as a condition that the Emperor should form no alliance with an enemy of France. The quarrel of both England and Germany with the Papacy at once grew ripe. The German Diet met to declare that the Imperial power came from God alone, and that the choice of an Emperor needed no Papal confirmation, while Benedict replied by a formal excommunication of Lewis. England on the other hand entered on a religious revolution when she stood hand in hand with an excommunicated power. It was significant that though worship ceased in Flanders on the Pope's interdict, the English priests who were brought over set the interdict at nought.

The negotiation of this alliance occupied the whole of 1337; it ended in a promise of the Emperor on payment of 3,000 gold florins to furnish two thousand men at arms. In the opening of 1338 an attack of Philip on the Agenois forced Edward into open war. His profuse expenditure however brought little fruit. Though Edward crossed to Antwerp in the summer, the year was spent in negotiations with the princes of the Lower Rhine and in an interview with the Emperor at Coblenz, where Lewis appointed him Vicar-General of the Emperor for all territories on the left bank of the Rhine. The occupation of Cambray, an Imperial fief, by the French King gave a

*Failure
of the
Alliance.*

CHAP. II. formal ground for calling the princes of this district to Edward's standard. But already the great alliance showed signs of yielding. Edward, uneasy at his connexion with an Emperor under the ban of the Church and harassed by vehement remonstrances from the Pope, entered again into negotiations with France in the winter of 1338; and Lewis, alarmed in his turn, listened to fresh overtures from Benedict, who held out vague hopes of reconciliation while he threatened a renewed excommunication if Lewis persisted in invading France. The non-arrival of the English subsidy decided the Emperor to take no personal part in the war, and the attitude of Lewis told on the temper of Edward's German allies. Though all joined him in the summer of 1339 on his formal summons of them as Vicar-General of the Empire, and his army when it appeared before Cambray numbered forty thousand men, their ardour cooled as the town held out. Philip approached it from the south, and on Edward's announcing his resolve to cross the river and attack him he was at once deserted by the two border princes who had most to lose from a contest with France, the Counts of Hainault and Namur. But the King was still full of hope. He pushed forward to the country round St. Quentin between the head waters of the Somme and the Oise with the purpose of forcing a decisive engagement. But he found Philip strongly encamped, and declaring their supplies exhausted his allies at once called for a retreat. It was in vain that Edward moved slowly for a week along the French border. Philip's position was too strongly guarded by marshes and entrenchments to be attacked, and at last the allies would stay no longer. At the news that the French King had withdrawn to the south the whole army in turn fell back upon Brussels.

*England
and the
Papacy.*

The failure of the campaign dispelled the hopes which Edward had drawn from his alliance with the Empire. With the exhaustion of his subsidies the princes of the Low Countries became inactive. The Duke of Brabant became cooler in his friendship. The Emperor himself,

still looking to an accommodation with the Pope and justly jealous of Edward's own intrigues at Avignon, wavered and at last fell away. But though the alliance ended in disappointment it had given a new impulse to the grudge against the Papacy which began with its extortions in the reign of Henry the Third. The hold of Rome on the loyalty of England was sensibly weakening. Their transfer from the Eternal City to Avignon robbed the Popes of half the awe which they had inspired among Englishmen. Not only did it bring them nearer and more into the light of common day, but it dwarfed them into mere agents of French policy. The old bitterness at their exactions was revived by the greed to which they were driven through their costly efforts to impose a French and Papal Emperor on Germany as well as to secure themselves in their new capital on the Rhone. The mighty building, half fortress, half palace, which still awes the traveller at Avignon has played its part in our history. Its erection was to the rise of Lollardry what the erection of St. Peter's was to the rise of Lutheranism. Its massive walls, its stately chapel, its chambers glowing with the frescoes of Simone Memmi, the garden which covered its roof with a strange verdure, called year by year for fresh supplies of gold; and for this as for the wider and costlier schemes of Papal policy gold could be got only by pressing harder and harder on the national churches the worst claims of the Papal court, by demands of first-fruits and annates from rectory and bishoprick, by pretensions to the right of bestowing all benefices which were in ecclesiastical patronage and by the sale of these presentations, by the direct taxation of the clergy, by the intrusion of foreign priests into English livings, by opening a mart for the disposal of pardons, dispensations, and indulgences, and by encouraging appeals from every ecclesiastical jurisdiction to the Papal court. No grievance was more bitterly felt than this grievance of appeals. Cases of the most trifling importance were called for decision out of the realm to a

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CHAP. II. tribunal whose delays were proverbial and whose fees were enormous. The envoy of an Oxford College which sought only a formal licence to turn a vicarage into a rectory had not only to bear the expense and toil of a journey which then occupied some eighteen days but was kept dangling at Avignon for three-and-twenty weeks. Humiliating and vexatious however as these appeals were, they were but one among the means of extortion which the Papal court multiplied as its needs grew greater. The protest of a later Parliament, exaggerated as its statements no doubt are, shows the extent of the national irritation, if not of the grievances which produced it. It asserted that the taxes levied by the Pope amounted to five times the amount of those levied by the king; that by reservations during the life of actual holders the Pope disposed of the same bishoprick four or five times over, receiving each time the first-fruits. "The brokers of the sinful city of Rome promote for money unlearned and unworthy caitiffs to benefices to the value of a thousand marks, while the poor and learned hardly obtain one of twenty. So decays sound learning. They present aliens who neither see nor care to see their parishioners, despise God's services, convey away the treasure of the realm, and are worse than Jews or Saracens. The Pope's revenue from England alone is larger than that of any prince in Christendom. God gave his sheep to be pastured, not to be shaven and shorn." At the close of this reign indeed the deaneries of Lichfield, Salisbury, and York, the archdeaconry of Canterbury, which was reputed the wealthiest English benefice, together with a host of prebends and preferments, were held by Italian cardinals and priests, while the Pope's collector from his office in London sent twenty thousand marks a year to the Papal treasury.

*Protest of
the Par-
liament.*

But the greed of the Popes was no new grievance, though the increase of these exactions since the removal to Avignon gave it a new force. What alienated England

most was their connexion with and dependence on France. From the first outset of the troubles in the North their attitude had been one of hostility to the English projects. France was too useful a supporter of the Papal court to find much difficulty in inducing it to aid in hampering the growth of English greatness. Boniface the Eighth released Balliol from his oath of fealty, and forbade Edward to attack Scotland on the ground that it was a fief of the Roman see. His intervention was met by a solemn and emphatic protest from the English Parliament; but it none the less formed a terrible obstacle in Edward's way. The obstacle was at last removed by the quarrel of Boniface with Philip the Fair; but the end of this quarrel only threw the Papacy more completely into the hands of France. Though Avignon remained imperial soil, the removal of the Popes to this city on the verge of their dominions made them mere tools of the French Kings. Much no doubt of the endless negotiation which the Papal court carried on with Edward the Third in his strife with Philip of Valois was an honest struggle for peace. But to England it seemed the mere interference of a dependent on behalf of "our enemy of France." The people scorned a "French Pope," and threatened Papal legates with stoning when they landed on English shores. The alliance of Edward with an excommunicated Emperor, the bold defiance with which English priests said mass in Flanders when an interdict reduced the Flemish priests to silence, were significant tokens of the new attitude which England was taking up in the face of Popes who were leagued with its enemy. The old quarrel over ecclesiastical wrongs was renewed in a formal and decisive way. In 1343 the Commons petitioned for the redress of the grievance of Papal appointments to vacant livings in despite of the rights of patrons or the Crown; and Edward formally complained to the Pope of his appointing "foreigners, most of them suspicious persons, who do not reside on their benefices, who do not know the faces

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CHAP. II. of the flocks entrusted to them, who do not understand
 Edward the Third. their language, but, neglecting the cure of souls, seek as
 1327- hirelings only their worldly hire." In yet sharper words
 1347. the King rebuked the Papal greed. "The successor of
 the Apostles was set over the Lord's sheep to feed and
 not to shear them." The Parliament declared "that they
 neither could nor would tolerate such things any longer;"
 and the general irritation moved slowly towards those
 statutes of Provisors and Praemunire which heralded the
 policy of Henry the Eighth.

Flanders. But for the moment the strife with the Papacy was
 set aside in the efforts which were needed for a new
 struggle with France. The campaign of 1339 had not
 only ended in failure, it had dispelled the trust of Edward
 in an Imperial alliance. But as this hope faded away a
 fresh hope dawned on the King from another quarter.
 Flanders, still bleeding from the defeat of its burghers
 by the French knighthood, was his natural ally. England
 was the great wool-producing country of the west, but
 few woollen fabrics were woven in England. The number
 of weavers' guilds shows that the trade was gradually ex-
 tending, and at the very outset of his reign Edward had
 taken steps for its encouragement. He invited Flemish
 weavers to settle in his country, and took the new immi-
 grants, who chose the eastern counties for the seat of their
 trade, under his royal protection. But English manufac-
 tures were still in their infancy and nine-tenths of the
 English wool went to the looms of Bruges or of Ghent.
 We may see the rapid growth of this export trade in the
 fact that the King received in a single year more than
 £30,000 from duties levied on wool alone. The wool-sack
 which forms the Chancellor's seat in the House of Lords
 is said to witness to the importance which the govern-
 ment attached to this new source of wealth. A stoppage
 of this export threw half the population of the great
 Flemish towns out of work, and the irritation caused in
 Flanders by the interruption which this trade sustained

through the piracies that Philip's ships were carrying on
 in the Channel showed how effective the threat of such
 a stoppage would be in securing their alliance. Nor was
 this the only ground for hoping for aid from the Flemish
 towns. Their democratic spirit jostled roughly with the
 feudalism of France. If their counts clung to the French
 monarchy, the towns themselves, proud of their immense
 population, their thriving industry, their vast wealth, drew
 more and more to independence. Jacques van Artevelde,
 a great brewer of Ghent, wielded the chief influence in
 their councils, and his aim was to build up a confederacy
 which might hold France in check along her northern
 border.

His plans had as yet brought no help from the Flemish
 towns, but at the close of 1339 they set aside their
 neutrality for open aid. The great plan of Federation
 which Van Artevelde had been devising as a check on
 the aggression of France was carried out in a treaty
 concluded between Edward, the Duke of Brabant, the
 cities of Brussels, Antwerp, Louvain, Ghent, Bruges,
 Ypres, and seven others. By this remarkable treaty it
 was provided that war should be begun and ended only
 by mutual consent, free commerce be encouraged between
 Flanders and Brabant, and no change made in their com-
 mercial arrangements save with the consent of the whole
 league. By a subsequent treaty the Flemish towns owned
 Edward as King of France, and declared war against
 Philip of Valois. But their voice was decisive on the
 course of the campaign which opened in 1340. As Philip
 held the Upper Scheldt by the occupation of Cambrai, so
 he held the Lower Scheldt by that of Tournay, a fortress
 which broke the line of commerce between Flanders and
 Brabant. It was a condition of the Flemish alliance
 therefore that the war should open with the capture of
 Tournay. It was only at the cost of a fight however
 that Edward could now cross the Channel to undertake
 the siege. France was as superior in force at sea as on

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CHAP. II. land; and a fleet of two hundred vessels gathered at Sluys to intercept him. But the fine seamanship of the English sailors justified the courage of their King in attacking this fleet with far smaller forces; the French ships were utterly destroyed and twenty thousand Frenchmen slain in the encounter. It was with the lustre of this great victory about him that Edward marched upon Tournay. Its siege however proved as fruitless as that of Cambray in the preceding year, and after two months of investment his vast army of one hundred thousand men broke up without either capturing the town or bringing Philip when he approached it to an engagement. Want of money forced Edward to a truce for a year, and he returned beggared and embittered to England.

*Edward's
distress.*

He had been worsted in war as in diplomacy. One naval victory alone redeemed years of failure and expense. Guienne was all but lost, England was suffering from the terrible taxation, from the ruin of commerce, from the ravages of her coast. Five years of constant reverses were hard blows for a King of twenty-eight who had been glorious and successful at twenty-three. His financial difficulties indeed were enormous. It was in vain that, availing himself of an Act which forbade the exportation of wool "till by the King and his Council it is otherwise provided," he turned for the time the wool-trade into a royal monopoly and became the sole wool exporter, buying at £3 and selling at £20 the sack. The campaign of 1339 brought with it a crushing debt: that of 1340 proved yet more costly. Edward attributed his failure to the slackness of his ministers in sending money and supplies, and this to their silent opposition to the war. But wroth as he was on his return, a short struggle between the ministers and the King ended in a reconciliation, and preparations for renewed hostilities went on. Abroad indeed nothing could be done. The Emperor finally withdrew from Edward's friendship. A new Pope, Clement the Sixth, proved even more French in sentiment than his prede-

cessor. Flanders alone held true of all England's foreign allies. Edward was powerless to attack Philip in the realm he claimed for his own; what strength he could gather was needed to prevent the utter ruin of the English cause in Scotland on the return of David Bruce. Edward's soldiers had been driven from the open country and confined to the fortresses of the Lowlands. Even these were at last reft away. Perth was taken by siege, and the King was too late to prevent the surrender of Stirling. Edinburgh was captured by a stratagem. Only Roxburgh and Berwick were saved by a truce which Edward was driven to conclude with the Scots.

But with the difficulties of the Crown the weight of the two Houses made itself more and more sensibly felt. The almost incessant warfare which had gone on since the accession of Edward the Third consolidated and developed the power which they had gained from the dissensions of his father's reign. The need of continual grants brought about an assembly of Parliament year by year, and the subsidies that were accorded to the King showed the potency of the financial engine which the Crown could now bring into play. In a single year the Parliament granted twenty thousand sacks, or half the wool of the realm. Two years later the Commons voted an aid of thirty thousand sacks. In 1339 the barons granted the tenth sheep and fleece and lamb. The clergy granted two tenths in one year, and a tenth for three years in the next. But with each supply some step was made to greater political influence. In his earlier years Edward showed no jealousy of the Parliament. His policy was to make the struggle with France a national one by winning for it the sympathy of the people at large; and with this view he not only published in the County Courts the efforts he had made for peace, but appealed again and again for the sanction and advice of Parliament in his enterprise. In 1331 he asked the Estates whether they would prefer negotiation or war: in 1338 he declared

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*Progress
of Par-
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that his expedition to Flanders was made by the assent of the Lords and at the prayer of the Commons. The part of the last in public affairs grew greater in spite of their own efforts to remain obscure. From the opening of the reign a crowd of enactments for the regulation of trade, whether wise or unwise, shows the influence of the burgesses. But the final division of Parliament into two Houses, a change which was completed by 1341, necessarily increased the weight of the Commons. The humble trader who shrank from counselling the Crown in great matters of policy gathered courage as he found himself sitting side by side with the knights of the shire. It was at the moment when this great change was being brought about that the disasters of the war spurred the Parliament to greater activity. The enormous grants of 1340 were bought by the King's assent to statutes which provided remedies for grievances of which the Commons complained. The most important of these put an end to the attempts which Edward had made like his grandfather to deal with the merchant class apart from the Houses. No charges or aid was henceforth to be made save by the common assent of the Estates assembled in Parliament. The progress of the next year was yet more important. The strife of the King with his ministers, the foremost of whom was Archbishop Stratford, ended in the Primate's refusal to make answer to the royal charges save in full Parliament, and in the assent of the King to a resolution of the Lords that none of their number, whether ministers of the Crown or no, should be brought to trial elsewhere than before his peers. The Commons demanded and obtained the appointment of commissioners elected in Parliament to audit the grants already made. Finally it was enacted that at each Parliament the ministers should hold themselves accountable for all grievances; that on any vacancy the King should take counsel with his lords as to the choice of the new minister; and that, when chosen, each minister should be sworn in Parliament.

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*Close of
the truce.*

At the moment which we have reached therefore the position of the Parliament had become far more important than at Edward's accession. Its form was settled. The third estate had gained a fuller parliamentary power. The principle of ministerial responsibility to the Houses had been established by formal statute. But the jealousy of Edward was at last completely roused, and from this moment he looked on the new power as a rival to his own. The Parliament of 1341 had no sooner broken up than he revoked by Letters Patent the statutes it had passed as done in prejudice of his prerogative and only assented to for the time to prevent worse confusion. The regular assembly of the Estates was suddenly interrupted, and two years passed without a Parliament. It was only the continual presence of war which from this time drove Edward to summon the Houses at all. Though the truce still held good between England and France a quarrel of succession to the Duchy of Brittany which broke out in 1341 and called Philip to the support of one claimant, his cousin Charles of Blois, and Edward to the support of a rival claimant, John of Montfort, dragged on year after year. In Flanders things went ill for the English cause. The dissensions between the great and the smaller towns, and in the greater towns themselves between the weavers and fullers, dissensions which had taxed the genius of Van Arteveldt through the nine years of his wonderful rule, broke out in 1345 into a revolt at Ghent in which the great statesman was slain. With him fell a design for the deposition of the Count of Flanders and the reception of the Prince of Wales in his stead which he was ardently pressing, and whose political results might have been immense. Deputies were at once sent to England to excuse Van Arteveldt's murder and to promise loyalty to Edward; but the King's difficulties had now reached their height. His loans from the Florentine bankers amounted to half a million. His claim on the French crown found not a single adherent save among the

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burghers of the Flemish towns. The overtures which he made for peace were contemptuously rejected, and the expiration of the truce in 1345 found him again face to face with France.

But it was perhaps this breakdown of all foreign hope that contributed to Edward's success in the fresh outbreak of war. The war opened in Guienne, and Henry of Lancaster, who was now known as the Earl of Derby, and who with the Hainaulter Sir Walter Maunay took the command in that quarter, at once showed the abilities of a great general. The course of the Garonne was cleared by his capture of La Reole and Aiguillon, that of the Dordogne by the reduction of Bergerac, and a way opened for the reconquest of Poitou by the capture of Angoulême. These unexpected successes roused Philip to strenuous efforts, and a hundred thousand men gathered under his son, John, Duke of Normandy, for the subjugation of the South. Angoulême was won back, and Aiguillon besieged when Edward sailed to the aid of his hard-pressed lieutenant. It was with an army of thirty thousand men, half English, half Irish and Welsh, that he commenced a march which was to change the whole face of the war. His aim was simple. Flanders was still true to Edward's cause, and while Derby was pressing on in the south a Flemish army besieged Bouvines and threatened France from the north. The King had at first proposed to land in Guienne and relieve the forces in the south; but suddenly changing his design he disembarked at La Hogue and advanced through Normandy. By this skilful movement Edward not only relieved Derby but threatened Paris, and left himself able to co-operate with either his own army in the south or the Flemings in the north. Normandy was totally without defence, and after the sack of Caen, which was then one of the wealthiest towns in France, Edward marched upon the Seine. His march threatened Rouen and Paris, and its strategical value was seen by the sudden panic of the French King. Philip was wholly taken by

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surprise. He attempted to arrest Edward's march by an offer to restore the Duchy of Aquitaine as Edward the Second had held it, but the offer was fruitless. Philip was forced to call his son to the rescue. John at once raised the siege of Aiguillon, and the French army moved rapidly to the north, its withdrawal enabling Derby to capture Poitiers and make himself thorough master of the south. But John was too distant from Paris for his forces to avail Philip in his emergency, for Edward, finding the bridges on the Lower Seine broken, pushed straight on Paris, rebuilt the bridge of Poissy, and threatened the capital.

At this crisis however France found an unexpected help in a body of German knights. The long strife between Lewis of Bavaria and the Papacy had ended at last in Clement's carrying out his sentence of deposition by the nomination and coronation as emperor of Charles of Luxemburg, a son of King John of Bohemia, the well known Charles IV. of the Golden Bull. But against this Papal assumption of a right to bestow the German Crown Germany rose as one man. Not a town opened its gates to the Papal claimant, and driven to seek help and refuge from Philip of Valois he found himself at this moment on the eastern frontier of France with his father and 500 knights. Hurrying to Paris this German force formed the nucleus of an army which assembled at St. Denys; and which was soon reinforced by 15,000 Genoese cross-bowmen who had been hired from among the soldiers of the Lord of Monaco on the sunny Riviera and arrived at this hour of need. With this host rapidly gathering in his front Edward abandoned his march on Paris, which had already served its purpose in relieving Derby, and threw himself across the Seine to carry out the second part of his programme by a junction with the Flemings at Gravelines and a campaign in the north. But the rivers in his path were carefully guarded, and it was only by surprising the ford of Blanche-Taque on the Somme that

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the King escaped the necessity of surrendering to the vast host which was now hastening in pursuit. His communications however were no sooner secured than he halted on the twenty-sixth of August at the little village of Crécy in Ponthieu and resolved to give battle. Half of his army, which had been greatly reduced in strength by his rapid marches, consisted of light-armed footmen from Ireland and Wales; the bulk of the remainder was composed of English bowmen. The King ordered his men-at-arms to dismount, and drew up his forces on a low rise sloping gently to the south-east, with a deep ditch covering its front, and its flanks protected by woods and a little brook. From a windmill on the summit of this rise Edward could overlook the whole field of battle. Immediately beneath him lay his reserve, while at the base of the slope was placed the main body of the army in two divisions, that to the right commanded by the young Prince of Wales, Edward "the Black Prince," as he was called, that to the left by the Earl of Northampton. A small ditch protected the English front, and behind it the bowmen were drawn up "in the form of a harrow" with small bombards between them "which with fire threw little iron balls to frighten the horses," the first instance known of the use of artillery in field-warfare.

The halt of the English army took Philip by surprise, and he attempted for a time to check the advance of his army. But the attempt was fruitless and the disorderly host rolled on to the English front. The sight of his enemies indeed stirred Philip's own blood to fury, "for he hated them." The fight began at vespers. The Genoese cross-bowmen were ordered to open the attack, but the men were weary with their march, a sudden storm wetted and rendered useless their bowstrings, and the loud shouts with which they leapt forward to the encounter were met with dogged silence in the English ranks. Their first arrow flight however brought a terrible reply. So rapid was the English shot "that it seemed as if it snowed."

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"Kill me these scoundrels," shouted Philip, as the Genoese fell back; and his men-at-arms plunged butchering into their broken ranks while the Counts of Alençon and Flanders at the head of the French knighthood fell hotly on the Prince's line. For an instant his small force seemed lost, and he called his father to support him. But Edward refused to send him aid. "Is he dead, or unhorsed, or so wounded that he cannot help himself?" he asked the envoy. "No, sir," was the reply, "but he is in a hard passage of arms, and sorely needs your help." "Return to those that sent you," said the King, "and bid them not send to me again so long as my son lives! Let the boy win his spurs, for, if God so order it, I will that the day may be his and that the honour may be with him and them to whom I have given it in charge." Edward could see in fact from his higher ground that all went well. The English bowmen and men-at-arms held their ground stoutly while the Welshmen stabbed the French horses in the belly and brought knight after knight to the ground. Soon the French host was wavering in a fatal confusion. "You are my vassals, my friends," cried the blind John of Bohemia to the German nobles around him, "I pray and beseech you to lead me so far into the fight that I may strike one good blow with this sword of mine!" Linking their bridles together, the little company plunged into the thick of the combat to fall as their fellows were falling. The battle went steadily against the French. At last Philip himself hurried from the field, and the defeat became a rout. Twelve hundred knights and thirty thousand footmen—a number equal to the whole English force—lay dead upon the ground.

"God has punished us for our sins," cries the chronicler of St. Denys in a passion of bewildered grief as he tells the rout of the great host which he had seen mustering beneath his abbey walls. But the fall of France was hardly so sudden or so incomprehensible as the ruin at a single blow of a system of warfare, and with it of the

The
Yeoman.

CHAP. II. political and social fabric which had risen out of that system. Feudalism rested on the superiority of the horseman to the footman, of the mounted noble to the unmounted churl. The real fighting power of a feudal army lay in its knighthood, in the baronage and landowners who took the field, each with his group of esquires and mounted men-at-arms. A host of footmen followed them, but they were ill-armed, ill-disciplined, and seldom called on to play any decisive part on the actual battle-field. In France, and especially at the moment we have reached, the contrast between the efficiency of these two elements of warfare was more striking than elsewhere. Nowhere was the chivalry so splendid, nowhere was the general misery and oppression of the poor more terribly expressed in the worthlessness of the mob of footmen who were driven by their lords to the camp. In England, on the other hand, the failure of feudalism to win a complete hold on the country was seen in the persistence of the older national institutions which based its defence on the general levy of its freemen. If the foreign Kings added to this a system of warlike organization grounded on the service due from its military tenants to the Crown, they were far from regarding this as superseding the national "fyrd." The Assize of Arms, the Statute of Winchester, show with what care the fyrd was held in a state of efficiency. Its force indeed as an engine of war was fast rising between the age of Henry the Second and that of Edward the Third. The social changes on which we have already dwelt, the facilities given to alienation and the subdivision of lands, the transition of the serf into a copyholder and of the copyholder by redemption of his services into a freeholder, the rise of a new class of "farmers" as the lords ceased to till their demesne by means of bailiffs and adopted the practise of leasing it at a rent or "farm" to one of the customary tenants, the general increase of wealth which was telling on the social position even of those who still remained in villenage, undid more and

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more the earlier process which had degraded the free ceorl of the English Conquest into the villen of the Norman Conquest, and covered the land with a population of yeomen, some freeholders, some with services that every day became less weighty and already left them virtually free.

Such men, proud of their right to justice and an equal law, called by attendance in the county court to a share in the judicial, the financial, and the political life of the realm, were of a temper to make soldiers of a different sort from the wretched serfs who followed the feudal lords of the Continent; and they were equipped with a weapon which as they wielded it was enough of itself to make a revolution in the art of war. The bow, identified as it became with English warfare, was the weapon not of Englishmen but of their Norman conquerors. It was the Norman arrow-flight that decided the day of Senlac. But in the organization of the national army it had been assigned as the weapon of the poorer freeholders who were liable to serve at the King's summons; and we see how closely it had become associated with them in the picture of Chaucer's yeoman. "In his hand he bore a mighty bow." Its might lay not only in the range of the heavy war-shaft, a range we are told of four hundred yards, but in its force. The English archer, taught from very childhood "how to draw, how to lay his body to the bow," his skill quickened by incessant practise and constant rivalry with his fellows, raised the bow into a terrible engine of war. Thrown out along the front in a loose order that alone showed their vigour and self-dependence, the bowmen faced and riddled the splendid line of knighthood as it charged upon them. The galled horses "reeled right rudely." Their riders found even the steel of Milan a poor defence against the grey-goose shaft. Gradually the bow dictated the very tactics of an English battle. If the mass of cavalry still plunged forward, the screen of archers broke to right and left and the men-at-arms who lay in

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The Bow.

CHAP. II. reserve behind them made short work of the broken and
 Edward the Third. disordered horsemen, while the light troops from Wales
 1327- and Ireland flinging themselves into the melly with their
 1347. long knives and darts brought steed after steed to the
 ground. It was this new military engine that Edward the
 Third carried to the fields of France. His armies were
 practically bodies of hired soldiery, for the short period of
 feudal service was insufficient for foreign campaigns, and
 yeoman and baron were alike drawn by a high rate of pay.
 An archer's daily wages equalled some five shillings of our
 present money. Such payment when coupled with the
 hope of plunder was enough to draw yeomen from thorpe
 and farm; and though the royal treasury was drained as
 it had never been drained before the English King saw
 himself after the day of Crécy the master of a force
 without rival in the stress of war.

*Siege of
 Calais.*

To England her success was the beginning of a career
 of military glory, which fatal as it was destined to prove
 to the higher sentiments and interests of the nation gave
 it a warlike energy such as it had never known before.
 Victory followed victory. A few months after Crécy a
 Scotch army marched over the border and faced on the
 seventeenth of October an English force at Neville's Cross.
 But it was soon broken by the arrow-flight of the English
 archers, and the Scotch King David Bruce was taken
 prisoner. The withdrawal of the French from the Garonne
 enabled Henry of Derby to recover Poitou. Edward
 meanwhile with a decision which marks his military
 capacity marched from the field of Crécy to form the
 siege of Calais. No measure could have been more
 popular with the English merchant class, for Calais was
 a great pirate-haven and in a single year twenty-two
 privateers from its port had swept the Channel. But
 Edward was guided by weightier considerations than this.
 In spite of his victory at Sluys the superiority of France
 at sea had been a constant embarrassment. From this
 difficulty the capture of Calais would do much to deliver

him, for Dover and Calais together bridled the Channel.
 Nor was this all. Not only would the possession of the
 town give Edward a base of operations against France,
 but it afforded an easy means of communication with the
 only sure allies of England, the towns of Flanders. Flanders
 seemed at this moment to be wavering. Its Count had
 fallen at Crécy, but his son Lewis le Mâle, though his
 sympathies were as French as his father's, was received in
 November by his subjects with the invariable loyalty
 which they showed to their rulers; and his own efforts to
 detach them from England were seconded by the influence
 of the Duke of Brabant. But with Edward close at hand
 beneath the walls of Calais the Flemish towns stood true.
 They prayed the young Count to marry Edward's daughter,
 imprisoned him on his refusal, and on his escape to the
 French Court in the spring of 1347 they threw themselves
 heartily into the English cause. A hundred thousand
 Flemings advanced to Cassel and ravaged the French
 frontier.

The danger of Calais roused Philip from the panic
 which had followed his defeat, and with a vast army he
 advanced to the north. But Edward's lines were impreg-
 nable. The French King failed in another attempt to
 dislodge the Flemings, and was at last driven to retreat
 without a blow. Hopeless of further succour, the town after
 a year's siege was starved into surrender in August 1347.
 Mercy was granted to the garrison and the people on
 condition that six of the citizens gave themselves into
 the English King's hands. "On them," said Edward
 with a burst of bitter hatred, "I will do my will." At
 the sound of the town bell, Jehan le Bel tells us, the
 folk of Calais gathered round the bearer of these terms,
 "desiring to hear their good news, for they were all mad
 with hunger. When the said knight told them his news,
 then began they to weep and cry so loudly that it was
 great pity. Then stood up the wealthiest burgess of the
 town, Master Eustache de St. Pierre by name, and spake

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thus before all: 'My masters, great grief and mishap it were for all to leave such a people as this is to die by famine or otherwise; and great charity and grace would he win from our Lord who could defend them from dying. For me, I have great hope in the Lord that if I can save this people by my death I shall have pardon for my faults, wherefore will I be the first of the six, and of my own will put myself barefoot in my shirt and with a halter round my neck in the mercy of King Edward.' The list of devoted men was soon made up, and the victims were led before the king. "All the host assembled together; there was great press, and many bade hang them openly, and many wept for pity. The noble King came with his train of counts and barons to the place, and the Queen followed him, though great with child, to see what there would be. The six citizens knelt down at once before the King, and Master Eustache spake thus:— 'Gentle King, here we be six who have been of the old bourgeoisie of Calais and great merchants; we bring you the keys of the town and castle of Calais, and render them to you at your pleasure. We set ourselves in such wise as you see purely at your will, to save the remnant of the people that has suffered much pain. So may you have pity and mercy on us for your high nobleness' sake.' Certes, there was then in that place neither lord nor knight that wept not for pity, nor who could speak for pity; but the King had his heart so hardened by wrath that for a long while he could not reply; then he commanded to cut off their heads. All the knights and lords prayed him with tears, as much as they could, to have pity on them, but he would not hear. Then spoke the gentle knight, Master Walter de Maunay, and said, 'Ha, gentle sire! bridle your wrath; you have the renown and good fame of all gentleness; do not a thing whereby men can speak any villany of you! If you have no pity, all men will say that you have a heart full of all cruelty to put these good citizens to death that of their own will are

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come to render themselves to you to save the remnant of the people.' At this point the King changed countenance with wrath, and said 'Hold your peace, Master Walter! it shall be none otherwise. Call the headsman. They of Calais have made so many of my men die, that they must die themselves!' Then did the noble Queen of England a deed of noble lowliness, seeing she was great with child, and wept so tenderly for pity that she could no longer stand upright; therefore she cast herself on her knees before her lord the King and spake on this wise: 'Ah, gentle sire, from the day that I passed over sea in great peril, as you know, I have asked for nothing: now pray I and beseech you, with folded hands, for the love of our Lady's Son to have mercy upon them.' The gentle King waited a while before speaking, and looked on the Queen as she knelt before him bitterly weeping. Then began his heart to soften a little, and he said, 'Lady, I would rather you had been elsewhere; you pray so tenderly that I dare not refuse you; and though I do it against my will, nevertheless take them, I give them to you.' Then took he the six citizens by the halters and delivered them to the Queen, and released from death all those of Calais for the love of her; and the good lady bade them clothe the six burgesses and make them good cheer."

CHAPTER III.

THE PEASANT REVOLT.

1347-1381.

*Edward
the Third.*

STILL in the vigour of manhood, for he was but thirty-five, Edward the Third stood at the height of his renown. He had won the greatest victory of his age. France, till now the first of European states, was broken and dashed from her pride of place at a single blow. The kingdom seemed to lie at Edward's mercy, for Guienne was recovered, Flanders was wholly on his side, and Brittany, where the capture of Charles of Blois secured the success of his rival and the English party which supported him, opened the road to Paris. At home his government was popular, and Scotland, the one enemy he had to dread, was bridled by the capture of her King. How great his renown was in Europe was seen in 1347, when on the death of Lewis of Bavaria the electors offered him the Imperial Crown. Edward was in truth a general of a high order, and he had shown himself as consummate a strategist in the campaign as a tactician in the field. But to the world about him he was even more illustrious as the foremost representative of the showy chivalry of his day. He loved the pomp of tournaments; he revived the Round Table of the fabled Arthur; he celebrated his victories by the creation of a new order of knighthood. He had varied the sterner operations of the siege of Calais by a hand to hand combat with one of the bravest of the French knights. A naval picture of Froissart sketches

Edward for us as he sailed to meet a Spanish fleet which was sweeping the narrow seas. We see the King sitting on deck in his jacket of black velvet, his head covered by a black beaver hat "which became him well," and calling on Sir John Chandos to troll out the songs he had brought with him from Germany, till the Spanish ships heave in sight and a furious fight begins which ends in a victory that leaves Edward "King of the Seas."

But beneath all this glitter of chivalry lay the subtle, busy diplomatist. None of our Kings was so restless a negotiator. From the first hour of Edward's rule the threads of his diplomacy ran over Europe in almost inextricable confusion. And to all who dealt with him he was equally false and tricky. Emperor was played off against Pope and Pope against Emperor, the friendship of the Flemish towns was adroitly used to put a pressure on their counts, the national wrath against the exactions of the Roman see was employed to bridle the French sympathies of the court of Avignon, and when the statutes which it produced had served their purpose they were set aside for a bargain in which King and Pope shared the plunder of the Church between them. His temper was as false in his dealings with his people as in his dealings with the European powers. Edward aired to country and parliament his English patriotism. "Above all other lands and realms" he made his chancellor say "the King had most tenderly at heart his land of England, a land more full of delight and honour and profit to him than any other." His manners were popular; he donned on occasion the livery of a city gild; he dined with a London merchant. His perpetual parliaments, his appeals to them and to the country at large for counsel and aid, seemed to promise a ruler who was absolutely one at heart with the people he ruled. But when once Edward passed from sheer carelessness and gratification at the new source of wealth which the Parliament opened to a sense of what its power really was becoming, he showed himself as jealous of freedom

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as any king that had gone before him. He sold his assent to its demands for heavy subsidies, and when he had pocketed the money coolly declared the statutes he had sanctioned null and void. The constitutional progress which was made during his reign was due to his absorption in showy schemes of foreign ambition, to his preference for war and diplomatic intrigue over the sober business of civil administration. The same shallowness of temper, the same showiness and falsehood, ran through his personal character. The King who was a model of chivalry in his dealings with knight and noble showed himself a brutal savage to the burgesses of Calais. Even the courtesy to his Queen which throws its halo over the story of their deliverance went hand in hand with a constant disloyalty to her. When once Philippa was dead his profligacy threw all shame aside. He paraded a mistress as Queen of Beauty through the streets of London, and set her in pomp over tournaments as the Lady of the Sun. The nobles were quick to follow their lord's example. "In those days," writes a chronicler of the time, "arose a rumour and clamour among the people that wherever there was a tournament there came a great concourse of ladies, of the most costly and beautiful but not of the best in the kingdom, sometimes forty and fifty in number, as if they were a part of the tournament, ladies clad in diverse and wonderful male apparel, in parti-coloured tunics, with short caps and bands wound cord-wise round their heads, and girdles bound with gold and silver, and daggers in pouches across their body. And thus they rode on choice coursers to the place of tourney; and so spent and wasted their goods and vexed their bodies with scurrilous wantonness that the murmurs of the people sounded everywhere. But they neither feared God nor blushed at the chaste voice of the people."

The
Black
Death.

The "chaste voice of the people" was soon to grow into the stern moral protest of the Lollards, but for the moment all murmurs were hushed by the King's success. The

truce which followed the capture of Calais seemed a mere rest in the career of victories which opened before Edward. England was drunk with her glory and with the hope of plunder. The cloths of Caen had been brought after the sack of that town to London. "There was no woman," says Walsingham, "who had not got garments, furs, feather-beds, and utensils from the spoils of Calais and other foreign cities." The Court revelled in gorgeous tournaments and luxury of dress; and the establishment in 1346 of the Order of the Garter which found its home in the new castle that Edward was raising at Windsor marked the highest reach of the spurious "Chivalry" of the day. But it was at this moment of triumph that the whole colour of Edward's reign suddenly changed. The most terrible plague the world has ever witnessed advanced from the East, and after devastating Europe from the shores of the Mediterranean to the Baltic swooped at the close of 1348 upon Britain. The traditions of its destructiveness and the panic-struck words of the statutes passed after its visitation have been amply justified by modern research. Of the three or four millions who then formed the population of England more than one half were swept away in its repeated visitations. Its ravages were fiercest in the greater towns where filthy and undrained streets afforded a constant haunt to leprosy and fever. In the burial ground which the piety of Sir Walter Maunay purchased for the citizens of London, a spot whose site was afterwards marked by the Charter House, more than fifty thousand corpses are said to have been interred. Thousands of people perished at Norwich, while in Bristol the living were hardly able to bury the dead. But the Black Death fell on the villages almost as fiercely as on the towns. More than one-half of the priests of Yorkshire are known to have perished; in the diocese of Norwich two-thirds of the parishes changed their incumbents. The whole organization of labour was thrown out of gear. The scarcity of hands produced by the terrible mortality made it difficult

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for villeins to perform the services due for their lands, and only a temporary abandonment of half the rent by the landowners induced the farmers of their demesnes to refrain from the abandonment of their farms. For a time cultivation became impossible. "The sheep and cattle strayed through the fields and corn," says a contemporary, "and there were none left who could drive them." Even when the first burst of panic was over, the sudden rise of wages consequent on the enormous diminution in the supply of labour, though accompanied by a corresponding rise in the price of food, rudely disturbed the course of industrial employments. Harvests rotted on the ground and fields were left untilled not merely from scarcity of hands but from the strife which now for the first time revealed itself between capital and labour.

*Its Social
Results.*

Nowhere was the effect of the Black Death so keenly felt as in its bearing on the social revolution which had been steadily going on for a century past throughout the country. At the moment we have reached the lord of a manor had been reduced over a large part of England to the position of a modern landlord, receiving a rental in money from his tenants and supplying their place in the cultivation of his demesne lands by paid labourers. He was driven by the progress of enfranchisement to rely for the purposes of cultivation on the supply of hired labour, and hitherto this supply had been abundant and cheap. But with the ravages of the Black Death and the decrease of population labour at once became scarce and dear. There was a general rise of wages, and the farmers of the country as well as the wealthier craftsmen of the town saw themselves threatened with ruin by what seemed to their age the extravagant demands of the labour class. Meanwhile the country was torn with riot and disorder. An outbreak of lawless self-indulgence which followed everywhere in the wake of the plague told especially upon the "landless men," workers wandering in search of work who found themselves for the first time masters of the

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labour market; and the wandering labourer or artizan turned easily into the "sturdy beggar," or the bandit of the woods. A summary redress for these evils was at once provided by the Crown in a royal proclamation. "Because a great part of the people," runs this ordinance, "and principally of labourers and servants, is dead of the plague, some, seeing the need of their lords and the scarcity of servants, are unwilling to serve unless they receive excessive wages, and others are rather begging in idleness than supporting themselves by labour, we have ordained that any able-bodied man or woman, of whatsoever condition, free or serf, under sixty years of age, not living of merchandize nor following a trade nor having of his own wherewithal to live, either his own land with the culture of which he could occupy himself, and not serving another, shall if so required serve another for such wages as was the custom in the twentieth year of our reign or five or six years before."

It was the failure of this ordinance to effect its ends which brought about at the close of 1349 the passing of the Statute of Labourers. "Every man or woman," runs this famous provision, "of whatsoever condition, free or bond, able in body, and within the age of threescore years, . . . and not having of his own whereof he may live, nor land of his own about the tillage of which he may occupy himself, and not serving any other, shall be bound to serve the employer who shall require him to do so, and shall take only the wages which were accustomed to be taken in the neighbourhood where he is bound to serve" two years before the plague began. A refusal to obey was punished by imprisonment. But sterner measures were soon found to be necessary. Not only was the price of labour fixed by the Parliament of 1350 but the labour class was once more tied to the soil. The labourer was forbidden to quit the parish where he lived in search of better paid employment; if he disobeyed he became a "fugitive," and subject to imprisonment at the hands of

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Labourers.*

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justices of the peace. To enforce such a law literally must have been impossible, for corn rose to so high a price that a day's labour at the old wages would not have purchased wheat enough for a man's support. But the landowners did not flinch from the attempt. The repeated re-enactment of the law shows the difficulty of applying it and the stubbornness of the struggle which it brought about. The fines and forfeitures which were levied for infractions of its provisions formed a large source of royal revenue, but so ineffectual were the original penalties that the runaway labourer was at last ordered to be branded with a hot iron on the forehead, while the harbouring of serfs in towns was rigorously put down. Nor was it merely the existing class of free labourers which was attacked by this reactionary movement. The increase of their numbers by a commutation of labour services for money payments was suddenly checked, and the ingenuity of the lawyers who were employed as stewards of each manor was exercised in striving to restore to the landowners that customary labour whose loss was now severely felt. Manumissions and exemptions which had passed without question were cancelled on grounds of informality, and labour services from which they held themselves freed by redemption were again demanded from the villeins. The attempt was the more galling that the cause had to be pleaded in the manor-court itself, and to be decided by the very officer whose interest it was to give judgement in favour of his lord. We can see the growth of a fierce spirit of resistance through the statutes which strove in vain to repress it. In the towns, where the system of forced labour was applied with even more rigour than in the country, strikes and combinations became frequent among the lower craftsmen. In the country the free labourers found allies in the villeins whose freedom from manorial service was questioned. These were often men of position and substance, and throughout the eastern counties the gatherings of "fugitive serfs" were supported by an organized resistance and by large

contributions of money on the part of the wealthier tenantry.

With plague, famine, and social strife in the land, it was no time for reaping the fruits even of such a victory as Crécy. Luckily for England the pestilence had fallen as heavily on her foe as on herself. A common suffering and exhaustion forced both countries to a truce, and though desultory fighting went on along the Breton and Aquitanian borders, the peace which was thus secured lasted with brief intervals of fighting for seven years. It was not till 1355 that the failure of a last effort to turn the truce into a final peace again drove Edward into war. The campaign opened with a brilliant prospect of success. Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, held as a prince of descent from the house of Valois large fiefs in Normandy; and a quarrel springing suddenly up between him and John, who had now succeeded his father Philip on the throne of France, Charles offered to put his fortresses into Edward's hands. Master of Cherbourg, Avranches, Pontaudemer, Evreux and Meulan, Mantes, Mortain, Pontoise, Charles held in his hands the keys of France; and Edward grasped at the opportunity of delivering a crushing blow. Three armies were prepared to act in Normandy, Brittany, and Guienne. But the first two, with Edward and Henry of Derby, who had been raised to the dukedom of Lancaster, at their head, were detained by contrary winds, and Charles, despairing of their arrival, made peace with John. Edward made his way to Calais to meet the tidings of this desertion and to be called back to England by news of a recapture of Berwick by the Scots. But his hopes of Norman co-operation were revived in 1356. The treachery of John, his seizure of the King of Navarre, and his execution of the Count of Harcourt who was looked upon as the adviser of Charles in his policy of intrigue, stirred a general rising throughout Normandy. Edward at once despatched troops under the Duke of Lancaster to its support. But the insurgents were soon forced to fall back. Conscious of the danger to which an English

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occupation of Normandy would expose him, John hastened with a large army to the west, drove Lancaster to Cherbourg, took Evreux, and besieged Breteuil.

Here however his progress was suddenly checked by news from the south. The Black Prince, as the hero of Crécy was called, had landed in Guienne during the preceding year and won a disgraceful success. Unable to pay his troops, he staved off their demands by a campaign of sheer pillage. While plague and war and the anarchy which sprang up under the weak government of John were bringing ruin on the northern and central provinces of France, the south remained prosperous and at peace. The young prince led his army of freebooters up the Garonne into "what was before one of the fat countries of the world, the people good and simple, who did not know what war was; indeed no war had been waged against them till the Prince came. The English and Gascons found the country full and gay, the rooms adorned with carpets and draperies, the caskets and chests full of fair jewels. But nothing was safe from these robbers. They, and especially the Gascons, who are very greedy, carried off everything." Glutted by the sack of Carcassone and Narbonne the plunderers fell back to Bordeaux, "their horses so laden with spoil that they could hardly move." Worthier work awaited the Black Prince in the following year. In the plan of campaign for 1356 it had been arranged that he should march upon the Loire, and there unite with a force under the Duke of Lancaster which was to land in Brittany and push rapidly into the heart of France. Delays however hindered the Prince from starting from Bordeaux till July, and when his march brought him to the Loire the plan of campaign had already broken down. The outbreak in Normandy had tempted the English Council to divert the force under Lancaster from Brittany to that province; and the Duke was now at Cherbourg, hard pressed by the French army under John. But if its original purpose was foiled, the march of the Black Prince on the Loire served still more

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effectively the English cause. His advance pointed straight upon Paris, and again as in the Crécy campaign John was forced to leave all for the protection of the capital. Hasty marches brought the King to the Loire while Prince Edward still lay at Vierzon on the Cher. Unconscious of John's designs, he wasted some days in the capture of Romorantin while the French troops were crossing the Loire along its course from Orleans to Tours and John with the advance was hurrying through Loches upon Poitiers in pursuit, as he supposed, of the retreating Englishmen. But the movement of the French army, near as it was, was unknown in the English camp; and when the news of it forced the Black Prince to order a retreat the enemy was already far ahead of him. Edward reached the fields north of Poitiers to find his line of retreat cut off and a French army of sixty thousand men interposed between his forces and Bordeaux.

If the Prince had shown little ability in his management of the campaign, he showed tactical skill in the fight which was now forced on him. On the nineteenth of September he took a strong position in the fields of Mauvertuis, where his front was covered by thick hedges and approachable only by a deep and narrow lane which ran between vineyards. The vineyards and hedges he lined with bowmen, and drew up his small body of men-at-arms at the point where the lane opened upon the higher plain on which he was himself encamped. Edward's force numbered only eight thousand men, and the danger was great enough to force him to offer in exchange for a free retreat the surrender of his prisoners and of the places he had taken, with an oath not to fight against France for seven years to come. His offers however were rejected, and the battle opened with a charge of three hundred French knights up the narrow lane. But the lane was soon choked with men and horses, while the front ranks of the advancing army fell back before a galling fire of arrows from the hedgerows. In this moment of confusion a body of English

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horsemen, posted unseen by their opponents on a hill to the right, charged suddenly on the French flank, and the Prince watching the disorder which was caused by the repulse and surprise fell boldly on their front. The steady shot of the English archers completed the panic produced by this sudden attack. The first French line was driven in, and on its rout the second, a force of sixteen thousand men, at once broke in wild terror and fled from the field. John still held his ground with the knights of the reserve, whom he had unwisely ordered to dismount from their horses, till a charge of the Black Prince with two thousand lances threw this last body into confusion. The French King was taken, desperately fighting; and when his army poured back at noon in utter rout to the gates of Poitiers eight thousand of their number had fallen on the field, three thousand in the flight, and two thousand men-at-arms, with a crowd of nobles, were taken prisoners. The royal captive entered London in triumph, mounted on a big white charger, while the Prince rode by his side on a little black hackney to the palace of the Savoy which was chosen as John's dwelling, and a truce for two years seemed to give healing-time to France.

Edward
and the
Scots.

With the Scots Edward the Third had less good fortune. Recalled from Calais by their seizure of Berwick, the King induced Balliol to resign into his hands his shadowy sovereignty, and in the spring of 1356 marched upon Edinburgh with an overpowering army, harrying and burning as he marched. But the Scots refused an engagement, a fleet sent with provisions was beaten off by a storm, and the famine-stricken army was forced to fall rapidly back on the border in a disastrous retreat. The trial convinced Edward that the conquest of Scotland was impossible, and by a rapid change of policy which marks the man he resolved to seek the friendship of the country he had wasted so long. David Bruce was released on promise of ransom, a truce concluded for ten years, and the prohibition of trade between the two kingdoms

put an end to. But the fulness of this reconciliation screened a dexterous intrigue. David was childless and Edward availed himself of the difficulty which the young King experienced in finding means of providing the sum demanded for his ransom to bring him over to a proposal which would have united the two countries for ever. The scheme however was carefully concealed; and it was not till 1363 that David proposed to his Parliament to set aside on his death the claims of the Steward of Scotland to his crown, and to choose Edward's third son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, as his successor. Though the proposal was scornfully rejected, negotiations were still carried on between the two Kings for the realization of this project, and were probably only put an end to by the calamities of Edward's later years.

In France misery and misgovernment seemed to be doing Edward's work more effectively than arms. The miserable country found no rest in itself. Its routed soldiery turned into free companies of bandits, while the lords captured at Crécy or Poitiers procured the sums needed for their ransom by extortion from the peasantry. The reforms demanded by the States-General which met in this agony of France were frustrated by the treachery of the Regent, John's eldest son Charles, Duke of Normandy, till Paris, impatient of his weakness and misrule, rose in arms against the Crown. The peasants too, driven mad by oppression and famine, rose in wild insurrection, butchering their lords and firing their castles over the whole face of France. Paris and the Jacquerie, as this peasant rising was called, were at last crushed by treachery and the sword: and, exhausted as it was, France still backed the Regent in rejecting a treaty of peace by which John in 1359 proposed to buy his release. By this treaty Maine, Touraine and Poitou in the south, Normandy, Guisnes, Ponthieu, and Calais in the west were ceded to the English King. On its rejection Edward in 1360 poured ravaging over the wasted land. Famine however proved its best

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defence. "I could not believe," said Petrarch of this time, "that this was the same France which I had seen so rich and flourishing. Nothing presented itself to my eyes but a fearful solitude, an utter poverty, land uncultivated, houses in ruins. Even the neighbourhood of Paris showed everywhere marks of desolation and conflagration. The streets are deserted, the roads overgrown with weeds, the whole is a vast solitude." The utter desolation forced Edward to carry with him an immense train of provisions, and thousands of baggage waggons with mills, ovens, forges, and fishing-boats, formed a long train which streamed for six miles behind his army. After a fruitless attempt upon Rheims he forced the Duke of Burgundy to conclude a treaty with him by pushing forward to Tonnerre, and then descending the Seine appeared with his army before Paris. But the wasted country forbade a siege, and Edward after summoning the town in vain was forced to fall back for subsistence on the Loire. It was during this march that the Duke of Normandy's envoys overtook him with proposals of peace. The misery of the land had at last bent Charles to submission and in May a treaty was concluded at Bretigny, a small place to the eastward of Chartres. By this treaty the English King waived his claims on the crown of France and on the Duchy of Normandy. On the other hand, his Duchy of Aquitaine, which included Gascony, Guienne, Poitou, and Saintonge, the Limousin and the Angoumois, Perigord and the counties of Bigorre and Rouerque, was not only restored but freed from its obligations as a French fief and granted in full sovereignty with Ponthieu, Edward's heritage from the second wife of Edward the First, as well as with Guisnes and his new conquest of Calais.

Misery of
England.

The Peace of Bretigny set its seal upon Edward's glory. But within England itself the misery of the people was deepening every hour. Men believed the world to be ending, and the judgement day to be near. A few months after the Peace came a fresh swoop of the Black Death,

carrying off the Duke of Lancaster. The repressive measures of Parliament and the landowners only widened the social chasm which parted employer from employed. We can see the growth of a fierce spirit of resistance both to the reactionary efforts which were being made to bring back labour services and to the enactments which again bound labour to the soil in statutes which strove in vain to repress the strikes and combinations which became frequent in the towns and the more formidable gatherings of villeins and "fugitive serfs" in the country at large. A statute of later date throws light on the nature of the resistance of the last. It tells us that "villeins and holders of land in villeinage withdrew their customs and services from their lords, having attached themselves to other persons who maintained and abetted them, and who under colour of exemplifications from Domesday of the manors and villages where they dwelt claimed to be quit of all manner of services either of their body or of their lands, and would suffer no distress or other course of justice to be taken against them; the villeins aiding their maintainers by threatening the officers of their lords with peril to life and limb as well by open assemblies as by confederacies to support each other." It would seem not only as if the villein was striving to resist the reactionary tendency of the lords of manors to regain his labour service but that in the general overturning of social institutions the copyholder was struggling to make himself a freeholder, and the farmer to be recognized as proprietor of the demesne he held on lease.

A more terrible outcome of the general suffering was seen in a new revolt against the whole system of social inequality which had till then passed unquestioned as the divine order of the world. The Peace was hardly signed when the cry of the poor found a terrible utterance in the words of "a mad priest of Kent" as the courtly Froissart calls him, who for twenty years to come found audience for his sermons in spite of interdict and imprisonment in

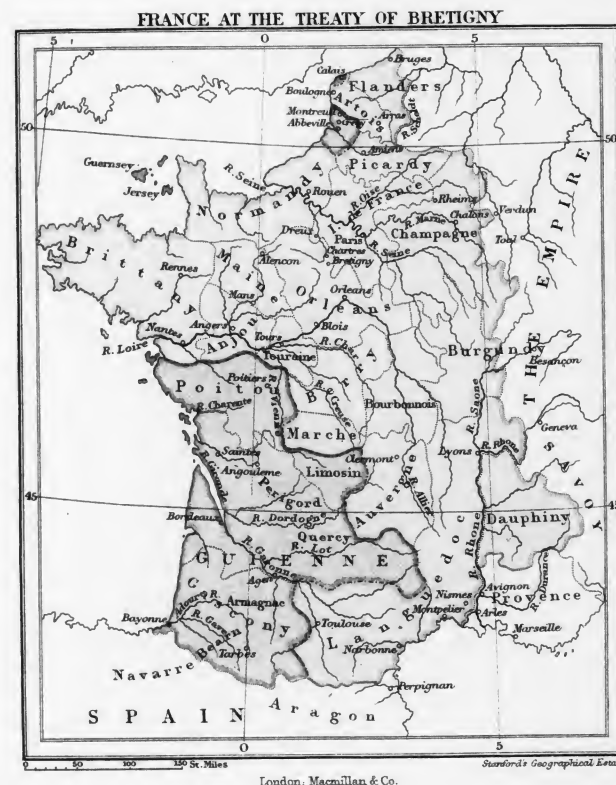
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John
Ball.

CHAP. III. the stout yeomen who gathered round him in the churchyards of Kent. "Mad" as the landowners held him to be, it was in the preaching of John Ball that England first listened to a declaration of the natural equality and rights of man. "Good people," cried the preacher, "things will never be well in England so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villeins and gentlemen. By what right are they whom we call lords greater folk than we? On what grounds have they deserved it? Why do they hold us in serfage? If we all came of the same father and mother, of Adam and Eve, how can they say or prove that they are better than we, if it be not that they make us gain for them by our toil what they spend in their pride? They are clothed in velvet and warm in their furs and their ermines, while we are covered with rags. They have wine and spices and fair bread; and we oat-cake and straw, and water to drink. They have leisure and fine houses; we have pain and labour, the rain and the wind in the fields. And yet it is of us and of our toil that these men hold their state." It was the tyranny of property that then as ever roused the defiance of socialism. A spirit fatal to the whole system of the Middle Ages breathed in the popular rime which condensed the levelling doctrine of John Ball:

"When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?"

William Longland. More impressive, because of the very restraint and moderation of its tone, is the poem in which William Longland began at the same moment to embody with a terrible fidelity all the darker and sterner aspects of the time, its social revolt, its moral and religious awakening, the misery of the poor, the selfishness and corruption of the rich. Nothing brings more vividly home to us the social chasm which in the fourteenth century severed the rich from the poor than the contrast between his "Complaint of Piers the Ploughman" and the "Canterbury Tales." The world of wealth and ease and laughter

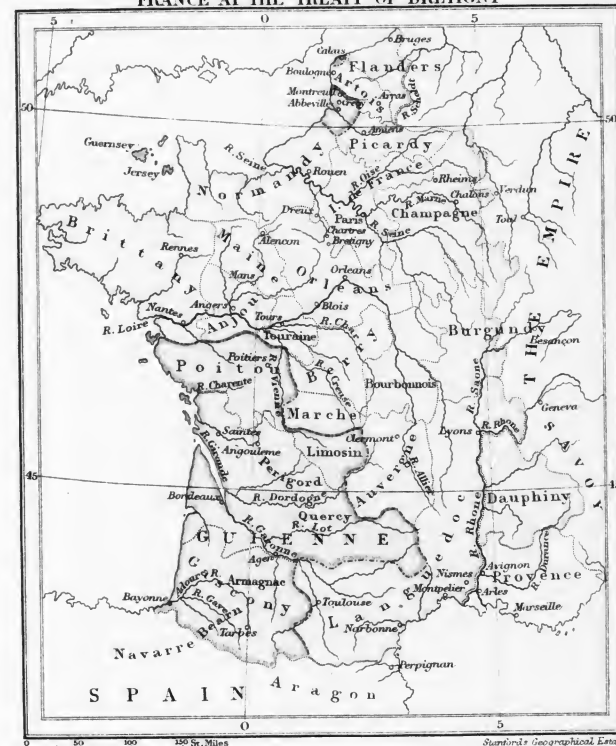


CHAP. III. the stout yeomen who gathered round him in the churchyards of Kent. "Mad" as the landowners held him to be, it was in the preaching of John Ball that England first listened to a declaration of the natural equality and rights of man. "Good people," cried the preacher, "things will never be well in England so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villeins and gentlemen. By what right are they whom we call lords greater folk than we? On what grounds have they deserved it? Why do they hold us in serfage? If we all came of the same father and mother, of Adam and Eve, how can they say or prove that they are better than we, if it be not that they make us gain for them by our toil what they spend in their pride? They are clothed in velvet and warm in their furs and their ermines, while we are covered with rags. They have wine and spices and fair bread; and we oat-cake and straw, and water to drink. They have leisure and fine houses; we have pain and labour, the rain and the wind in the fields. And yet it is of us and of our toil that these men hold their state." It was the tyranny of property that then as ever roused the defiance of socialism. A spirit fatal to the whole system of the Middle Ages breathed in the popular rime which condensed the levelling doctrine of John Ball:

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FRANCE AT THE TREATY OF BRETAGNY



London: Macmillan & Co.

Sumner's Geographical Institute

through which the courtly Chaucer moves with eyes downcast as in a pleasant dream is a far off world of wrong and of ungodliness to the gaunt poet of the poor. Born probably in Shropshire, where he had been put to school and received minor orders as a clerk, "Long Will," as Longland was nicknamed from his tall stature, found his way at an early age to London, and earned a miserable livelihood there by singing "placebos" and "diriges" in the stately funerals of his day. Men took the moody clerk for a madman; his bitter poverty quickened the defiant pride that made him loath, as he tells us, to bow to the gay lords and dames who rode decked in silver and minivere along the Cheap or to exchange a "God save you" with the law sergeants as he passed their new house in the Temple. His world is the world of the poor: he dwells on the poor man's life, on his hunger and toil, his rough revelry and his despair, with the narrow intensity of a man who has no outlook beyond it. The narrowness, the misery, the monotony of the life he paints reflect themselves in his verse. It is only here and there that a love of nature or a grim earnestness of wrath quickens his rime into poetry; there is not a gleam of the bright human sympathy of Chaucer, of his fresh delight in the gaiety, the tenderness, the daring of the world about him, of his picturesque sense of even its coarsest contrasts, of his delicate irony, of his courtly wit. The cumbrous allegory, the tedious platitudes, the rimed texts from Scripture which form the staple of Longland's work, are only broken here and there by phrases of a shrewd common sense, by bitter outbursts, by pictures of a broad Hogarthian humour. What chains one to the poem is its deep undertone of sadness: the world is out of joint, and the gaunt rimer who stalks silently along the Strand has no faith in his power to put it right.

Londoner as he is, Will's fancy flies far from the sin and suffering of the great city to a May-morning in the Malvern Hills. "I was very forwandered and went me

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Piers
Plough-
man.

CHAP. III. to rest under a broad bank by a burn side, and as I
 The Peasant Revolt. lay and leaned and looked in the water I slumbered
 1347-1381. in a sleeping, it sweyved (sounded) so merry." Just as
 Chaucer gathers the typical figures of the world he saw
 into his pilgrim train, so the dreamer gathers into a
 wide field his army of traders and chaffers, of hermits
 and solitaires, of minstrels, "japers and jinglers," bidders
 and beggars, ploughmen that "in setting and in sowing
 swonken (toil) full hard," pilgrims "with their wenches
 after," weavers and labourers, burgess and bondman,
 lawyer and scrivener, court-haunting bishops, friars, and
 pardoners "parting the silver" with the parish priest.
 Their pilgrimage is not to Canterbury but to Truth; their
 guide to Truth neither clerk nor priest but Peterkin the
 Ploughman, whom they find ploughing in his field. He it
 is who bids the knight no more wrest gifts from his tenant
 nor misdo with the poor. "Though he be thine underling
 here, well may hap in heaven that he be worthier set and
 with more bliss than thou. . . . For in charnel at church
 churles be evil to know, or a knight from a knave there."
 The gospel of equality is backed by the gospel of labour.
 The aim of the Ploughman is to work, and to make the
 world work with him. He warns the labourer as he
 warns the knight. Hunger is God's instrument in bring-
 ing the idlest to toil, and Hunger waits to work her
 will on the idler and the waster. On the eve of the
 great struggle between wealth and labour, Longland stands
 alone in his fairness to both, in his shrewd political and
 religious common sense. In the face of the popular
 hatred which was to gather round John of Gaunt, he
 paints the Duke in a famous apologue as the cat who,
 greedy as she might be, at any rate keeps the noble
 rats from utterly devouring the mice of the people.
 Though the poet is loyal to the Church, he pro-
 claims a righteous life to be better than a host of indul-
 gences, and God sends His pardon to Piers when priests
 dispute it. But he sings as a man conscious of his

loneliness and without hope. It is only in a dream that
 he sees Corruption, "Lady Mead," brought to trial, and
 the world repenting at the preaching of Reason. In
 the waking life reason finds no listeners. The poet him-
 self is looked upon—he tells us bitterly—as a madman.
 There is a terrible despair in the close of his later poem,
 where the triumph of Christ is only followed by the
 reign of Antichrist; where Contrition slumbers amidst
 the revel of Death and Sin; and Conscience, hard beset
 by Pride and Sloth, rouses himself with a last effort, and
 seizing his pilgrim staff, wanders over the world to find
 Piers Ploughman.

The strife indeed which Longland would have averted *Præmunire*,
 raged only the fiercer as the dark years went by. If the
 Statutes of Labourers were powerless for their immediate
 ends, either in reducing the actual rate of wages or in
 restricting the mass of floating labour to definite areas
 of employment, they proved effective in sowing hatred
 between employer and employed, between rich and poor.
 But this social rift was not the only rift which was
 opening amidst the distress and misery of the time. The
 close of William Longland's poem is the prophecy of a
 religious revolution; and the way for such a revolution
 was being paved by the growing bitterness of strife
 between England and the Papacy. In spite of the sharp
 protests from king and parliament the need for money at
 Avignon was too great to allow any relaxation in the
 Papal claims. Almost on the eve of Crecy Edward took
 the decisive step of forbidding the entry into England of
 any Papal bulls or documents interfering with the rights
 of presentation belonging to private patrons. But the
 tenacity of Rome was far from loosening its grasp on this
 source of revenue for all Edward's protests. Crecy how-
 ever gave a new boldness to the action of the state, and a
 Statute of Provisors was passed by the Parliament in 1351
 which again asserted the rights of the English Church and
 enacted that all who infringed them by the introduction

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CHAP. III. of Papal "provisors" should suffer imprisonment. But resistance to provisors only brought fresh vexations. The patrons who withstood a Papal nominee in the name of the law were summoned to defend themselves in the Papal Court. From that moment the supremacy of the Papal law over the law of the land became a great question in which the lesser question of provisors merged. The pretension of the Court of Avignon was met in 1353 by a statute which forbade any questioning of judgements rendered in the king's courts or any prosecution of a suit in foreign courts under pain of outlawry, perpetual imprisonment, or banishment from the land. It was this act of Præmunire—as it came in after renewals to be called—which furnished so terrible a weapon to the Tudors in their later strife with Rome. But the papacy paid little heed to these warnings, and its obstinacy in still receiving suits and appeals in defiance of this statute roused the pride of a conquering people. England was still fresh from her glory at Bretigny when Edward appealed to the Parliament of 1365. Complaints, he said, were constantly being made by his subjects to the Pope as to matters which were cognizable in the King's courts. The practice of provisors was thus maintained in the teeth of the laws, and "the laws, usages, ancient customs, and franchises of his kingdom were thereby much hindered, the King's crown degraded, and his person defamed." The King's appeal was hotly met. "Biting words," which it was thought wise to suppress, were used in the debate which followed, and the statutes against provisors and appeals were solemnly confirmed.

Wyclif. What gave point to this challenge was the assent of the prelates to the proceedings of the Parliament; and the pride of Urban V. at once met it by a counter-defiance. He demanded with threats the payment of the annual sum of a thousand marks promised by King John in acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the See of Rome. The insult roused the temper of the realm. The King laid the

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demand before Parliament, and both houses replied that "neither King John nor any king could put himself, his kingdom, nor his people under subjection save with their accord or assent." John's submission had been made "without their assent and against his coronation oath" and they pledged themselves, should the Pope attempt to enforce his claim, to resist him with all their power. Even Urban shrank from imperilling the Papacy by any further demands, and the claim to a Papal lordship over England was never again heard of. But the struggle had brought to the front a man who was destined to give a far wider scope and significance to this resistance to Rome than any as yet dreamed of. Nothing is more remarkable than the contrast between the obscurity of John Wyclif's earlier life and the fulness and vividness of our knowledge of him during the twenty years which preceded its close. Born in the earlier part of the fourteenth century, he had already passed middle age when he was appointed to the mastership of Balliol College in the University of Oxford and recognized as first among the schoolmen of his day. Of all the scholastic doctors those of England had been throughout the keenest and most daring in philosophical speculation. A reckless audacity and love of novelty was the common note of Bacon, Duns Scotus, and Ockham, as against the sober and more disciplined learning of the Parisian schoolmen, Albert and Thomas Aquinas. The decay of the University of Paris during the English wars was transferring her intellectual supremacy to Oxford, and in Oxford Wyclif stood without a rival. From his predecessor, Bradwardine, whose work as a scholastic teacher he carried on in the speculative treatises he published during this period, he inherited the tendency to a predestinarian Augustinianism which formed the groundwork of his later theological revolt. His debt to Ockham revealed itself in his earliest efforts at Church reform. Undismayed by the thunder and excommunications of the Church, Ockham had supported the Emperor

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Lewis of Bavaria in his recent struggle, and he had not shrunk in his enthusiasm for the Empire from attacking the foundations of the Papal supremacy or from asserting the rights of the civil power. The spare, emaciated frame of Wyclif, weakened by study and asceticism, hardly promised a reformer who would carry on the stormy work of Ockham; but within this frail form lay a temper quick and restless, an immense energy, an immovable conviction, an unconquerable pride. The personal charm which ever accompanies real greatness only deepened the influence he derived from the spotless purity of his life. As yet indeed even Wyclif himself can hardly have suspected the immense range of his intellectual power. It was only the struggle that lay before him which revealed in the dry and subtle schoolman the founder of our later English prose, a master of popular invective, of irony, of persuasion, a dexterous politician, an audacious partizan, the organizer of a religious order, the unsparing assailant of abuses, the boldest and most indefatigable of controversialists, the first Reformer who dared, when deserted and alone, to question and deny the creed of the Christendom around him, to break through the tradition of the past, and with his last breath to assert the freedom of religious thought against the dogmas of the Papacy.

"De
Dominio
Divino."

At the moment of the quarrel with Pope Urban however Wyclif was far from having advanced to such a position as this. As the most prominent of English scholars it was natural that he should come forward in defence of the independence and freedom of the English Church; and he published a formal refutation of the claims advanced by the Papacy to deal at its will with church property in the form of a report of the Parliamentary debates which we have described. As yet his quarrel was not with the doctrines of Rome but with its practices; and it was on the principles of Ockham that he defended the Parliament's refusal of the "tribute" which was claimed by Urban. But his treatise on "The Kingdom of God," "De

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Dominio Divino," which can hardly have been written later than 1368, shows the breadth of the ground he was even now prepared to take up. In this, the most famous of his works, Wyclif bases his argument on a distinct ideal of society. All authority, to use his own expression, is "founded in grace." Dominion in the highest sense is in God alone; it is God who as the suzerain of the universe deals out His rule in fief to rulers in their various stations on tenure of their obedience to himself. It was easy to object that in such a case "dominion" could never exist, since mortal sin is a breach of such a tenure and all men sin. But, as Wyclif urged it, the theory is a purely ideal one. In actual practice he distinguishes between dominion and power, power which the wicked may have by God's permission, and to which the Christian must submit from motives of obedience to God. In his own scholastic phrase, so strangely perverted afterwards, here on earth "God must obey the devil." But whether in the ideal or practical view of the matter all power and dominion was of God. It was granted by Him not to one person, His Vicar on earth, as the Papacy alleged, but to all. The King was as truly God's Vicar as the Pope. The royal power was as sacred as the ecclesiastical, and as complete over temporal things, even over the temporalities of the Church, as that of the Church over spiritual things. So far as the question of Church and State therefore was concerned the distinction between the ideal and practical view of "dominion" was of little account. Wyclif's application of the theory to the individual conscience was of far higher and wider importance. Obedient as each Christian might be to king or priest, he himself as a possessor of "dominion" held immediately of God. The throne of God Himself was the tribunal of personal appeal. What the Reformers of the sixteenth century attempted to do by their theory of Justification by Faith Wyclif attempted to do by his theory of Dominion, a theory which in establishing a direct relation between man and God swept away the

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and
Aqui-
taine.*

whole basis of a mediating priesthood, the very foundation on which the mediæval church was built.

As yet the full bearing of these doctrines was little seen. But the social and religious excitement which we have described was quickened by the renewal of the war, and the general suffering and discontent gathered bitterness when the success which had flushed England with a new and warlike pride passed into a long series of disasters in which men forgot the glories of Crecy and Poitiers. Triumph as it seemed, the treaty of Bretigny was really fatal to Edward's cause in the south of France. By the cession of Aquitaine to him in full sovereignty the traditional claim on which his strength rested lost its force. The people of the south had clung to their Duke, even though their Duke was a foreign ruler. They had stubbornly resisted incorporation with Northern France. While preserving however their traditional fealty to the descendants of Eleanor they still clung to the equally traditional suzerainty of the Kings of France. But the treaty of Bretigny not only severed them from the realm of France, it subjected them to the realm of England. Edward ceased to be their hereditary Duke, he became simply an English king ruling Aquitaine as an English dominion. If the Southerners loved the North-French little, they loved the English less, and the treaty which thus changed their whole position was followed by a quick revulsion of feeling from the Garonne to the Pyrenees. The Gascon nobles declared that John had no right to transfer their fealty to another and to sever them from the realm of France. The city of Rochelle prayed the French King not to release it from its fealty to him. "We will obey the English with our lips" said its citizens, "but our hearts shall never be moved towards them." Edward strove to meet this passion for local independence, this hatred of being ruled from London, by sending the Black Prince to Bordeaux and investing him in 1362 with the Duchy of Aquitaine. But the new Duke held his Duchy as a fief from the English King, and

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the grievance of the Southerners was left untouched. Charles V. who succeeded his father John in 1364 silently prepared to reap this harvest of discontent. Patient, wary, unscrupulous, he was hardly crowned before he put an end to the war which had gone on without a pause in Brittany by accepting homage from the claimant whom France had hitherto opposed. Through Bertrand du Guesclin, a fine soldier whom his sagacity had discovered, he forced the King of Navarre to a peace which closed the fighting in Normandy. A more formidable difficulty in the way of pacification and order lay in the Free Companies, a union of marauders whom the disbanding of both armies after the peace had set free to harry the wasted land and whom the King's military resources were insufficient to cope with. It was the stroke by which Charles cleared his realm of these scourges which forced on a new struggle with the English in the south.

In the judgement of the English court the friendship of Castille was of the first importance for the security of Aquitaine. Spain was the strongest naval power of the western world, and not only would the ports of Guienne be closed but its communication with England would be at once cut off by the appearance of a joint French and Spanish fleet in the Channel. It was with satisfaction therefore that Edward saw the growth of a bitter hostility between Charles and the Castilian King, Pedro the Cruel, through the murder of his wife, Blanche of Bourbon, the French King's sister-in-law. Henry of Trastamara, a bastard son of Pedro's father Alfonso the Eleventh, had long been a refugee at the French court, and soon after the treaty of Bretigny Charles in his desire to revenge this murder on Pedro gave Henry aid in an attempt on the Castilian throne. It was impossible for England to look on with indifference while a dependant of the French King became master of Castille; and in 1362 a treaty offensive and defensive was concluded between Pedro and Edward the Third. The time was not come for open war; but the

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Cruel.*

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subtle policy of Charles saw in this strife across the Pyrenees an opportunity both of detaching Castille from the English cause and of ridding himself of the Free Companies. With characteristic caution he dexterously held himself in the background while he made use of the Pope, who had been threatened by the Free Companies in his palace at Avignon and was as anxious to get rid of them as himself. Pedro's cruelty, misgovernment, and alliance with the Moslem of Cordova served as grounds for a crusade which was proclaimed by Pope Urban; and Du Guesclin, who was placed at the head of the expedition, found in the Papal treasury and in the hope of booty from an unravaged land means of gathering the marauders round his standard. As soon as these Crusaders crossed the Ebro Pedro was deserted by his subjects, and in 1366 Henry of Trastamara saw himself crowned without a struggle at Burgos as King of Castille. Pedro with his two daughters fled for shelter to Bordeaux and claimed the aid promised in the treaty. The lords of Aquitaine shrank from fighting for such a cause, but in spite of their protests and the reluctance of the English council to embark in so distant a struggle Edward held that he had no choice save to replace his ally, for to leave Henry seated on the throne was to leave Aquitaine to be crushed between France and Castille.

Charles
the
Fifth.

The after course of the war proved that in his anticipations of the fatal result of a combination of the two powers Edward was right, but his policy jarred not only against the universal craving for rest, but against the moral sense of the world. The Black Prince however proceeded to carry out his father's design in the teeth of the general opposition. His call to arms robbed Henry of the aid of those English Companies who had marched till now with the rest of the crusaders, but who returned at once to the standard of the Prince; the passes of Navarre were opened with gold, and in the beginning of 1367 the English army crossed the Pyrenees. Advancing to the Ebro the Prince

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offered battle at Navarete with an army already reduced by famine and disease in its terrible winter march, and Henry with double his numbers at once attacked him. But in spite of the obstinate courage of the Castilian troops the discipline and skill of the English soldiers once more turned the wavering day into a victory. Du Guesclin was taken, Henry fled across the Pyrenees, and Pedro was again seated on his throne. The pay however which he had promised was delayed; and the Prince, whose army had been thinned by disease to a fifth of its numbers and whose strength never recovered from the hardships of this campaign, fell back sick and beggared to Aquitaine. He had hardly returned when his work was undone. In 1368 Henry re-entered Castille; its towns threw open their gates; a general rising chased Pedro from the throne, and a final battle in the spring of 1369 saw his utter overthrow. His murder by Henry's hand left the bastard undisputed master of Castille. Meanwhile the Black Prince, sick and disheartened, was hampered at Bordeaux by the expenses of the campaign which Pedro had left unpaid. To defray his debt he was driven in 1368 to lay a hearth-tax on Aquitaine, and the tax served as a pretext for an outbreak of the long-hoarded discontent. Charles was now ready for open action. He had won over the most powerful among the Gascon nobles, and their influence secured the rejection of the tax in a Parliament of the province which met at Bordeaux. The Prince, pressed by debt, persisted against the counsel of his wisest advisers in exacting it; and the lords of Aquitaine at once appealed to the King of France. Such an appeal was a breach of the treaty of Bretigny in which the French King had renounced his sovereignty over the south; but Charles had craftily delayed year after year the formal execution of the renunciations stipulated in the treaty, and he was still able to treat it as not binding on him. The success of Henry of Trastamara decided him to take immediate action, and in 1369 he summoned the Black Prince as Duke of

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The Prince was maddened by the summons. "I will come" he replied, "but with helmet on head, and with sixty thousand men at my back." War however had hardly been declared when the ability with which Charles had laid his plans was seen in his seizure of Ponthieu and in a rising of the whole country south of the Garonne. Du Guesclin returned in 1370 from Spain to throw life into the French attack. Two armies entered Guienne from the east; and a hundred castles with La Reole and Limoges threw open their gates to Du Guesclin. But the march of an English army from Calais upon Paris recalled him from the south to guard the capital at a moment when the English leader advanced to recover Limoges, and the Black Prince borne in a litter to its walls stormed the town and sullied by a merciless massacre of its inhabitants the fame of his earlier exploits. Sickness however recalled him home in the spring of 1371; and the war, protracted by the caution of Charles who forbade his armies to engage, did little but exhaust the energy and treasure of England. As yet indeed the French attack had made small impression on the south, where the English troops stoutly held their ground against Du Guesclin's inroads. But the protracted war drained Edward's resources, while the diplomacy of Charles was busy in rousing fresh dangers from Scotland and Castille. It was in vain that Edward looked for allies to the Flemish towns. The male line of the Counts of Flanders ended in Count Louis le Male; and the marriage of his daughter Margaret with Philip, Duke of Burgundy, a younger brother of the French King, secured Charles from attack along his northern border. In Scotland the death of David Bruce put an end to Edward's schemes for a reunion of the two kingdoms; and his successor, Robert the Steward, renewed in 1371 the alliance with France.

Castille was a yet more serious danger; and an effort which Edward made to neutralize its attack only forced Henry of Trastamara to fling his whole weight into the struggle. The two daughters of Pedro had remained since their father's flight at Bordeaux. The elder of these was now wedded to John of Gaunt, Edward's fourth son, whom he had created Duke of Lancaster on his previous marriage with Blanche, a daughter of Henry of Lancaster and the heiress of that house, while the younger was wedded to Edward's fifth son, the Earl of Cambridge. Edward's aim was that of raising again the party of King Pedro and giving Henry of Trastamara work to do at home which would hinder his interposition in the war of Guienne. It was with this view that John of Gaunt on his marriage took the title of King of Castille. But no adherent of Pedro's cause stirred in Spain, and Henry replied to the challenge by sending a Spanish fleet to the Channel. A decisive victory which this fleet won over an English convoy off Rochelle proved a fatal blow to the English cause. It wrested from Edward the mastery of the seas, and cut off all communication between England and Guienne. Charles was at once roused to new exertions. Poitou, Saintonge, and the Angoumois yielded to his general Du Guesclin; and Rochelle was surrendered by its citizens in 1372. The next year saw a desperate attempt to restore the fortune of the English arms. A great army under John of Gaunt penetrated into the heart of France. But it found no foe to engage. Charles had forbidden any fighting. "If a storm rages over the land," said the King coolly, "it disperses of itself; and so will it be with the English." Winter in fact overtook the Duke of Lancaster in the mountains of Auvergne, and a mere fragment of his host reached Bordeaux. The failure of this attack was the signal for a general defection, and ere the summer of 1374 had closed the two towns of Bordeaux and Bayonne were all that remained of the English possessions in Southern France. Even these were only saved by the exhaustion

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of the conquerors. The treasury of Charles was as utterly drained as the treasury of Edward; and the Kings were forced to a truce.

Only fourteen years had gone by since the Treaty of Bretigny raised England to a height of glory such as it had never known before. But the years had been years of a shame and suffering which stung the people to madness. Never had England fallen so low. Her conquests were lost, her shores insulted, her commerce swept from the seas. Within she was drained by the taxation and bloodshed of the war. Its popularity had wholly died away. When the Commons were asked in 1354 whether they would assent to a treaty of perpetual peace if they might have it, "the said Commons responded all, and all together, 'Yes, yes!'" The population was thinned by the ravages of pestilence, for till 1369, which saw its last visitation, the Black Death returned again and again. The social strife too gathered bitterness with every effort at repression. It was in vain that Parliament after Parliament increased the severity of its laws. The demands of the Parliament of 1376 show how inoperative the previous Statutes of Labourers had proved. They prayed that constables be directed to arrest all who infringed the Statute, that no labourer should be allowed to take refuge in a town and become an artizan if there were need of his service in the county from which he came, and that the King would protect lords and employers against the threats of death uttered by serfs who refused to serve. The reply of the Royal Council shows that statesmen at any rate were beginning to feel that repression might be pushed too far. The King refused to interfere by any further and harsher provisions between employers and employed, and left cases of breach of law to be dealt with in his ordinary courts of justice. On the one side he forbade the threatening gatherings which were already common in the country, but on the other he forbade the illegal exactions of the employers. With such a reply

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however the proprietary class were hardly likely to be content. Two years later the Parliament of Gloucester called for a Fugitive-slave Law, which would have enabled lords to seize their serfs in whatever county or town they found refuge, and in 1379 they prayed that judges might be sent five times a year into every shire to enforce the Statute of Labourers.

But the strife between employers and employed was not the only rift which was opening in the social structure. Suffering and defeat had stripped off the veil which hid from the nation the shallow and selfish temper of Edward the Third. His profligacy was now bringing him to a premature old age. He was sinking into the tool of his ministers and his mistresses. The glitter and profusion of his court, his splendid tournaments, his feasts, his Table Round, his new order of chivalry, the exquisite chapel of St. Stephen whose frescoed walls were the glory of his palace at Westminster, the vast keep which crowned the hill of Windsor, had ceased to throw their glamour round a King who tricked his Parliament and swindled his creditors. Edward paid no debts. He had ruined the wealthiest bankers of Florence by a cool act of bankruptcy. The sturdier Flemish burghers only wrested payment from him by holding his royal person as their security. His own subjects fared no better than foreigners. The prerogative of "purveyance" by which the King in his progresses through the country had the right of first purchase of all that he needed at fair market price became a galling oppression in the hands of a bankrupt King who was always moving from place to place. "When men hear of your coming," Archbishop Islip wrote to Edward, "everybody at once for sheer fear sets about hiding or eating or getting rid of their geese and chickens or other possessions that they may not utterly lose them through your arrival. The purveyors and servants of your court seize on men and

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horses in the midst of their field work. They seize on the very bullocks that are at plough or at sowing, and force them to work for two or three days at a time without a penny of payment. It is no wonder that men make dole and murmur at your approach, for, as the truth is in God, I myself, whenever I hear a rumour of it, be I at home or in chapter or in church or at study, nay if I am saying mass, even I in my own person tremble in every limb." But these irregular exactions were little beside the steady pressure of taxation. Even in the years of peace fifteenths and tenths, subsidies on wool and subsidies on leather, were demanded and obtained from Parliament; and with the outbreak of war the royal demands became heavier and more frequent. As failure followed failure the expenses of each campaign increased: an ineffectual attempt to relieve Rochelle cost nearly a million; the march of John of Gaunt through France utterly drained the royal treasury. Nor were these legal supplies all that the King drew from the nation. He had repudiated his pledge to abstain from arbitrary taxation of imports and exports. He sold monopolies to the merchants in exchange for increased customs. He wrested supplies from the clergy by arrangements with the bishops or the Pope. There were signs that Edward was longing to rid himself of the control of Parliament altogether. The power of the Houses seemed indeed as high as ever; great statutes were passed. Those of Provisors and Præmunire settled the relations of England to the Roman Court. That of Treason in 1352 defined that crime and its penalties. That of the Staples in 1353 regulated the conditions of foreign trade and the privileges of the merchant gilds which conducted it. But side by side with these exertions of influence we note a series of steady encroachments by the Crown on the power of the Houses. If their petitions were granted, they were often altered in the royal ordinance which professed to embody them. A plan of demanding supplies

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for three years at once rendered the annual assembly of Parliament less necessary. Its very existence was threatened by the convocation in 1352 and 1353 of occasional councils with but a single knight from every shire and a single burgess from a small number of the greater towns, which acted as Parliament and granted subsidies.

What aided Edward above all in eluding or defying the constitutional restrictions on arbitrary taxation, as well as in these more insidious attempts to displace the Parliament, was the lessening of the check which the Baronage and the Church had till now supplied. The same causes which had long been reducing the number of the greater lords who formed the upper house went steadily on. Under Edward the Second little more than seventy were commonly summoned to Parliament; little more than forty were summoned under Edward the Third, and of these the bulk were now bound to the Crown, partly by their employment on its service, partly by their interest in the continuance of the war. The heads of the Baronage too were members of the royal family. Edward had carried out on a far wider scale than before the policy which had been more or less adhered to from the days of Henry the Third, that of gathering up in the hands of the royal house all the greater heritages of the land. The Black Prince was married to Joan of Kent, the heiress of Edward the First's younger son, Earl Edmund of Woodstock. His marriage with the heiress of the Earl of Ulster brought to the King's second son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, a great part of the possessions of the de Burghs. Later on the possessions of the house of Bohun passed by like matches to his youngest son, Thomas of Woodstock, and to his grandson Henry of Lancaster. But the greatest English heritage fell to Edward's third living son, John of Gaunt as he was called from his birth at Ghent during his father's Flemish campaign. Originally created Earl of Richmond, the death of his father-in-law, Henry of

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Lancaster, and of Henry's eldest daughter, raised John in his wife's right to the Dukedom of Lancaster and the Earldoms of Derby, Leicester, and Lincoln. But while the baronage were thus bound to the Crown, they drifted more and more into an hostility with the Church which in time disabled the clergy from acting as a check on it. What rent the ruling classes in twain was the growing pressure of the war. The nobles and knighthood of the country, already half ruined by the rise in the labour market and the attitude of the peasantry, were pressed harder than ever by the repeated subsidies which were called for by the continuance of the struggle. In the hour of their distress they cast their eyes greedily—as in the Norman and Angevin days—on the riches of the Church. Never had her wealth been greater. Out of a population of some three millions the ecclesiastics numbered between twenty and thirty thousand. Wild tales of their riches floated about the country. They were said to own in landed property alone more than a third of the soil, while their "spiritualities" in dues and offerings amounted to twice the King's revenue. Exaggerated as such statements were, the wealth of the Church was really great; but even more galling to the nobles was its influence in the royal councils. The feudal baronage, flushed with a new pride by its victories at Crécy and Poitiers, looked with envy and wrath at the throng of bishops around the council-board, and attributed to their love of peace the errors and sluggishness which had caused, as they held, the disasters of the war. To rob the Church of wealth and of power became the aim of a great baronial party.

Weakness
of the
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The efforts of the baronage indeed would have been fruitless had the spiritual power of the Church remained as of old. But the clergy were rent by their own dissensions. The higher prelates were busy with the cares of political office, and severed from the lower priesthood by the scandalous inequality between the revenues of the wealthier ecclesiastics and the "poor parson" of the country. A bitter

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hatred divided the secular clergy from the regular; and this strife went fiercely on in the Universities. Fitz-Ralf, the Chancellor of Oxford, attributed to the friars the decline which was already being felt in the number of academical students, and the University checked by statute their practice of admitting mere children into their order. The clergy too at large shared in the discredit and unpopularity of the Papacy. Though they suffered more than any other class from the exactions of Avignon, they were bound more and more to the Papal cause. The very statutes which would have protected them were practically set aside by the treacherous diplomacy of the Crown. At home and abroad the Roman see was too useful for the King to come to any actual breach with it. However much Edward might echo the bold words of his Parliament, he shrank from an open contest which would have added the Papacy to his many foes, and which would at the same time have robbed him of his most effective means of wresting aids from the English clergy by private arrangement with the Roman court. Rome indeed was brought to waive its alleged right of appointing foreigners to English livings. But a compromise was arranged between the Pope and the Crown in which both united in the spoliation and enslavement of the Church. The voice of chapters, of monks, of ecclesiastical patrons, went henceforth for nothing in the election of bishops or abbots or the nomination to livings in the gift of churchmen. The Crown recommended those whom it chose to the Pope, and the Pope nominated them to see or cure of souls. The treasuries of both King and Pope profited by the arrangement; but we can hardly wonder that after a betrayal such as this the clergy placed little trust in statutes or royal protection, and bowed humbly before the claims of Rome.

But what weakened the clergy most was their severance from the general sympathies of the nation, their selfishness, and the worldliness of their temper. Immense as their

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wealth was, they bore as little as they could of the common burthens of the realm. They were still resolute to assert their exemption from the common justice of the land, though the mild punishments of the bishops' courts carried as little dismay as ever into the mass of disorderly clerks. But privileged as they thus held themselves against all interference from the lay world without them, they carried on a ceaseless interference with the affairs of this lay world through their control over wills, contracts and divorces. No figure was better known or more hated than the summoner who enforced the jurisdiction and levied the dues of their courts. By their directly religious offices they penetrated into the very heart of the social life about them. But powerful as they were, their moral authority was fast passing away. The wealthier churchmen with their curled hair and hanging sleeves aped the costume of the knightly society from which they were drawn and to which they still really belonged. We see the general impression of their worldliness in Chaucer's pictures of the hunting monk and the courtly prioress with her love-motto on her brooch. The older religious orders in fact had sunk into mere landowners, while the enthusiasm of the friars had in great part died away and left a crowd of impudent mendicants behind it. Wyclif could soon with general applause denounce them as sturdy beggars, and declare that "the man who gives alms to a begging friar is ipso facto excommunicate."

*Advance
of the
Commons.*

It was this weakness of the Baronage and the Church, and the consequent withdrawal of both as represented in the temporal and spiritual Estates of the Upper House from the active part which they had taken till now in checking the Crown, that brought the Lower House to the front. The Knight of the Shire was now finally joined with the Burgess of the Town to form the Third Estate of the realm: and this union of the trader and the country gentleman gave a vigour and weight to the action of the Commons which their House could never

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have acquired had it remained as elsewhere a mere gathering of burgesses. But it was only slowly and under the pressure of one necessity after another that the Commons took a growing part in public affairs. Their primary business was with taxation, and here they stood firm against the evasions by which the King still managed to baffle their exclusive right of granting supplies by voluntary agreements with the merchants of the Staple. Their steady pressure at last obtained in 1362 an enactment that no subsidy should henceforth be set upon wool without assent of Parliament, while Purveyance was restricted by a provision that payments should be made for all things taken for the King's use in ready money. A hardly less important advance was made by the change of Ordinances into Statutes. Till this time, even when a petition of the Houses was granted, the royal Council had reserved to itself the right of modifying its form in the Ordinance which professed to embody it. It was under colour of this right that so many of the provisions made in Parliament had hitherto been evaded or set aside. But the Commons now met this abuse by a demand that on the royal assent being given their petitions should be turned without change into Statutes of the Realm and derive force of law from their entry on the Rolls of Parliament. The same practical sense was seen in their dealings with Edward's attempt to introduce occasional smaller councils with parliamentary powers. Such an assembly in 1353 granted a subsidy on wool. The Parliament which met in the following year might have challenged its proceedings as null and void, but the Commons more wisely contented themselves with a demand that the ordinances passed in the preceding assembly should receive the sanction of the Three Estates. A precedent for evil was thus turned into a precedent for good, and though irregular gatherings of a like sort were for a while occasionally held they were soon seen to be fruitless and discontinued. But the Commons long shrank from

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meddling with purely administrative matters. When Edward in his anxiety to shift from himself the responsibility of the war referred to them in 1354 for advice on one of the numerous propositions of peace, they referred him to the lords of his Council. "Most dreaded lord," they replied, "as to this war and the equipment needful for it we are so ignorant and simple that we know not how nor have the power to devise. Wherefore we pray your Grace to excuse us in this matter, and that it please you with the advice of the great and wise persons of your Council to ordain what seems best for you for the honour and profit of yourself and of your kingdom. And whatsoever shall be thus ordained by assent and agreement on the part of you and your Lords we readily assent to and will hold it firmly established."

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But humble as was their tone the growing power of the Commons showed itself in significant changes. In 1363 the Chancellor opened Parliament with a speech in English, no doubt as a tongue intelligible to the members of the Lower House. From a petition in 1376 that knights of the shire may be chosen by common election of the better folk of the shire and not merely nominated by the sheriff without due election, as well as from an earlier demand that the sheriffs themselves should be disqualified from serving in Parliament during their term of office, we see that the Crown had already begun not only to feel the pressure of the Commons but to meet it by foisting royal nominees on the constituencies. Such an attempt at packing the House would hardly have been resorted to had it not already proved too strong for direct control. A further proof of its influence was seen in a prayer of the Parliament that lawyers practising in the King's courts might no longer be eligible as knights of the shire. The petition marks the rise of a consciousness that the House was now no mere gathering of local representatives but a national assembly, and that a seat in it could no longer be confined to dwellers within the bounds of this county

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or that. But it showed also a pressure for seats, a passing away of the old dread of being returned as a representative and a new ambition to gain a place among the members of the Commons. Whether they would or no indeed the Commons were driven forward to a more direct interference with public affairs. From the memorable statute of 1322 their right to take equal part in all matters brought before Parliament had been incontestable, and their waiver of much of this right faded away before the stress of time. Their assent was needed to the great ecclesiastical statutes which regulated the relation of the see of Rome to the realm. They naturally took a chief part in the enactment and re-enactment of the Statute of Labourers. The Statute of the Staple, with a host of smaller commercial and economical measures, were of their origination. But it was not till an open breach took place between the baronage and the prelates that their full weight was felt. In the Parliament of 1371, on the resumption of the war, a noble taunted the Church as an owl protected by the feathers which other birds had contributed, and which they had a right to resume when a hawk's approach threatened them. The worldly goods of the Church, the metaphor hinted, had been bestowed on it for the common weal, and could be taken from it on the coming of a common danger. The threat was followed by a prayer that the chief offices of state, which had till now been held by the leading bishops, might be placed in lay hands. The prayer was at once granted: William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, resigned the Chancellorship, another prelate the Treasury, to lay dependents of the great nobles; and the panic of the clergy was seen in large grants which were voted by both Convocations.

At the moment of their triumph the assailants of the Church found a leader in John of Gaunt. The Duke of Lancaster now wielded the actual power of the Crown. Edward himself was sinking into dotage. Of his sons the

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Black Prince, who had never rallied from the hardships of his Spanish campaign, was fast drawing to the grave; he had lost a second son by death in childhood; the third, Lionel of Clarence, had died in 1368. It was his fourth son therefore, John of Gaunt, to whom the royal power mainly fell. By his marriage with the heiress of the house of Lancaster the Duke had acquired lands and wealth, but he had no taste for the policy of the Lancastrian house or for acting as leader of the barons in any constitutional resistance to the Crown. His pride, already quickened by the second match with Constance to which he owed his shadowy kingship of Castille, drew him to the throne; and the fortune which placed the royal power practically in his hands bound him only the more firmly to its cause. Men held that his ambition looked to the Crown itself, for the approaching death of Edward and the Prince of Wales left but a boy, Richard, the son of the Black Prince, a child of but a few years old, and a girl, the daughter of the Duke of Clarence, between John and the throne. But the Duke's success fell short of his pride. In the campaign of 1373 he traversed France without finding a foe and brought back nothing save a ruined army to English shores. The peremptory tone in which money was demanded for the cost of this fruitless march while the petitions of the Parliament were set aside till it was granted roused the temper of the Commons. They requested—it is the first instance of such a practice—a conference with the lords, and while granting fresh subsidies prayed that the grant should be spent only on the war. The resentment of the government at this advance towards a control over the actual management of public affairs was seen in the calling of no Parliament through the next two years. But the years were disastrous both at home and abroad. The war went steadily against the English arms. The long negotiations with the Pope which went on at Bruges through 1375, and in which Wyclif took part as one of the royal commissioners, ended

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in a compromise by which Rome yielded nothing. The strife over the Statute of Labourers grew fiercer and fiercer, and a return of the plague heightened the public distress. Edward was now wholly swayed by Alice Perrers, and the Duke shared his power with the royal mistress. But if we gather its tenor from the complaints of the succeeding Parliament his administration was as weak as it was corrupt. The new lay ministers lent themselves to gigantic frauds. The chamberlain, Lord Latimer, bought up the royal debts and embezzled the public revenue. With Richard Lyons, a merchant through whom the King negotiated with the gild of the Staple, he reaped enormous profits by raising the price of imports and by lending to the Crown at usurious rates of interest. When the empty treasury forced them to call a Parliament the ministers tampered with the elections through the sheriffs.

But the temper of the Parliament which met in 1376, and which gained from after times the name of the Good Parliament, shows that these precautions had utterly failed. Even their promise to pillage the Church had failed to win for the Duke and his party the good will of the lesser gentry or the wealthier burgesses who together formed the Commons. Projects of wide constitutional and social change, of the humiliation and impoverishment of an estate of the realm, were profoundly distasteful to men already struggling with a social revolution on their own estates and in their own workshops. But it was not merely its opposition to the projects of Lancaster and his party among the baronage which won for this assembly the name of the Good Parliament. Its action marked a new period in our Parliamentary history, as it marked a new stage in the character of the national opposition to the misrule of the Crown. Hitherto the task of resistance had devolved on the baronage, and had been carried out through risings of its feudal tenantry. But the misgovernment was now that of the baronage or of a main

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part of the baronage itself in actual conjunction with the Crown. Only in the power of the Commons lay any adequate means of peaceful redress. The old reluctance of the Lower House to meddle with matters of State was roughly swept away therefore by the pressure of the time. The Black Prince, anxious to secure his child's succession by the removal of John of Gaunt, the prelates with William of Wykeham at their head, resolute again to take their place in the royal councils and to check the projects of ecclesiastical spoliation put forward by their opponents, alike found in it a body to oppose to the Duke's administration. Backed by powers such as these, the action of the Commons showed none of their old timidity or self-distrust. The presentation of a hundred and sixty petitions of grievances preluded a bold attack on the royal Council. "Trusting in God, and standing with his followers before the nobles, whereof the chief was John Duke of Lancaster, whose doings were ever contrary," their speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare, denounced the mismanagement of the war, the oppressive taxation, and demanded an account of the expenditure. "What do these base and ignoble knights attempt?" cried John of Gaunt. "Do they think they be kings or princes of the land?" But the movement was too strong to be stayed. Even the Duke was silenced by the charges brought against the ministers. After a strict enquiry Latimer and Lyons were alike thrown into prison, Alice Perrers was banished, and several of the royal servants were driven from the Court. At this moment the death of the Black Prince shook the power of the Parliament. But it only heightened its resolve to secure the succession. His son, Richard of Bordeaux, as he was called from the place of his birth, was now a child of but ten years old; and it was known that doubts were whispered on the legitimacy of his birth and claim. An early marriage of his mother Joan of Kent, a granddaughter of Edward the First, with the Earl of Salisbury had

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been annulled; but the Lancastrian party used this first match to throw doubts on the validity of her subsequent union with the Black Prince and on the right of Richard to the throne. The dread of Lancaster's ambition is the first indication of the approach of what was from this time to grow into the great difficulty of the realm, the question of the succession to the Crown. From the death of Edward the Third to the death of Charles the First no English sovereign felt himself secure from rival claimants of his throne. As yet however the dread was a baseless one; the people were heartily with the Prince and his child. The Duke's proposal that the succession should be settled in case of Richard's death was rejected; and the boy himself was brought into Parliament and acknowledged as heir of the Crown.

To secure their work the Commons ended by obtaining the addition of nine lords with William of Wykeham and two other prelates among them to the royal Council. But the Parliament was no sooner dismissed than the Duke at once resumed his power. His anger at the blow which had been dealt at his projects was no doubt quickened by resentment at the sudden advance of the Lower House. From the Commons who shrank even from giving counsel on matters of state to the Commons who dealt with such matters as their special business, who investigated royal accounts, who impeached royal ministers, who dictated changes in the royal advisers, was an immense step. But it was a step which the Duke believed could be retraced. His haughty will flung aside all restraints of law. He dismissed the new lords and prelates from the Council. He called back Alice Perrers and the disgraced ministers. He declared the Good Parliament no parliament, and did not suffer its petitions to be enrolled as statutes. He imprisoned Peter de la Mare, and confiscated the possessions of William of Wykeham. His attack on this prelate was an attack on the clergy at large, and the attack became significant when the Duke gave his open patronage to the denuncia-

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tions of Church property which formed the favourite theme of John Wyclif. To Wyclif such a prelate as Wykeham symbolized the evil which held down the Church. His administrative ability, his political energy, his wealth and the colleges at Winchester and at Oxford which it enabled him to raise before his death, were all equally hateful. It was this wealth, this intermeddling with worldly business, which the ascetic reformer looked upon as the curse that robbed prelates and churchmen of that spiritual authority which could alone meet the vice and suffering of the time. Whatever baser motives might spur Lancaster and his party, their projects of spoliation must have seemed to Wyclif projects of enfranchisement for the Church. Poor and powerless in worldly matters, he held that she would have the wealth and might of heaven at her command. Wyclif's theory of Church and State had led him long since to contend that the property of the clergy might be seized and employed like other property for national purposes. Such a theory might have been left, as other daring theories of the schoolmen had been left, to the disputation of the schools. But the clergy were bitterly galled when the first among English teachers threw himself hotly on the side of the party which threatened them with spoliation, and argued in favour of their voluntary abandonment of all Church property and of a return to their original poverty. They were roused to action when Wyclif came forward as the theological bulwark of the Lancastrian party at a moment when the clergy were freshly outraged by the overthrow of the bishops and the plunder of Wykeham. They forced the King to cancel the sentence of banishment from the precincts of the Court which had been directed against the Bishop of Winchester by refusing any grant of supply in Convocation till William of Wykeham took his seat in it. But in the prosecution of Wyclif they resolved to return blow for blow. In February 1377 he was summoned before Bishop Courtenay of

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London to answer for his heretical propositions concerning the wealth of the Church.

The Duke of Lancaster accepted the challenge as really given to himself, and stood by Wyclif's side in the Consistory Court at St. Paul's. But no trial took place. Fierce words passed between the nobles and the prelate: the Duke himself was said to have threatened to drag Courtenay out of the church by the hair of his head; at last the London populace, to whom John of Gaunt was hateful, burst in to their Bishop's rescue, and Wyclif's life was saved with difficulty by the aid of the soldiery. But his boldness only grew with the danger. A Papal bull which was procured by the bishops, directing the University to condemn and arrest him, extorted from him a bold defiance. In a defence circulated widely through the kingdom and laid before Parliament, Wyclif broadly asserted that no man could be excommunicated by the Pope "unless he were first excommunicated by himself." He denied the right of the Church to exact or defend temporal privileges by spiritual censures, declared that a Church might justly be deprived by the King or lay lords of its property for defect of duty, and defended the subjection of ecclesiastics to civil tribunals. It marks the temper of the time and the growing severance between the Church and the nation that, bold as the defiance was, it won the support of the people as of the Crown. When Wyclif appeared at the close of the year in Lambeth Chapel to answer the Archbishop's summons a message from the Court forbade the primate to proceed and the Londoners broke in and dissolved the session.

Meanwhile the Duke's unscrupulous tampering with elections had packed the Parliament of 1377 with his adherents. The work of the Good Parliament was undone, and the Commons petitioned for the restoration of all who had been impeached by their predecessors. The needs of the treasury were met by a novel form of taxation. To the earlier land-tax, to the tax on personalty which dated from

Death of
Edward
the Third.

CHAP. III. the Saladin Tithe, to the customs duties which had grown into importance in the last two reigns, was now added a tax which reached every person in the realm, a poll-tax of a groat a head. In this tax were sown the seeds of future trouble, but when the Parliament broke up in March the Duke's power seemed completely secured. Hardly three months later it was wholly undone. In June Edward the Third died in a dishonoured old age, robbed on his death-bed even of his rings by the mistress to whom he clung, and the accession of his grandson, Richard the Second, changed the whole face of affairs. The Duke withdrew from court, and sought a reconciliation with the party opposed to him. The men of the Good Parliament surrounded the new King, and a Parliament which assembled in October took vigorously up its work. Peter de la Mare was released from prison and replaced in the chair of the House of Commons. The action of the Lower House indeed was as trenchant and comprehensive as that of the Good Parliament itself. In petition after petition the Commons demanded the confirmation of older rights and the removal of modern abuses. They complained of administrative wrongs such as the practice of purveyance, of abuses of justice, of the oppressions of officers of the exchequer and of the forest, of the ill state of the prisons, of the custom of "maintenance" by which lords extended their livery to shoals of disorderly persons and overawed the courts by means of them. Amid ecclesiastical abuses they noted the state of the Church courts, and the neglect of the laws of Provisors. They demanded that the annual assembly of Parliament, which had now become customary, should be defined by law, and that bills once sanctioned by the Crown should be forthwith turned into statutes without further amendment or change on the part of the royal Council. With even greater boldness they laid hands on the administration itself. They not only demanded that the evil counsellors of the last reign should be removed, and that the treasurer of the subsidy on wool

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should account for its expenditure to the lords, but that the royal Council should be named in Parliament, and chosen from members of either estate of the realm. Though a similar request for the nomination of the officers of the royal household was refused, their main demand was granted. It was agreed that the great officers of state, the chancellor, treasurer, and barons of exchequer should be named by the lords in Parliament, and removed from their offices during the king's "tender years" only on the advice of the lords. The pressure of the war, which rendered the existing taxes insufficient, gave the House a fresh hold on the Crown. While granting a new subsidy in the form of a land and property tax, the Commons restricted its proceeds to the war, and assigned two of their members, William Walworth and John Philpot, as a standing committee to regulate its expenditure. The successor of this Parliament in the following year demanded and obtained an account of the way in which the subsidy had been spent.

The minority of the King, who was but eleven years old at his accession, the weakness of the royal council amidst the strife of the baronial factions, above all the disasters of the war without and the growing anarchy within the realm itself, alone made possible this startling assumption of the executive power by the Houses. The shame of defeat abroad was being added to the misery and discomfort at home. The French war ran its disastrous course. One English fleet was beaten by the Spaniards, a second sunk by a storm; and a campaign in the heart of France ended, like its predecessors, in disappointment and ruin. Meanwhile the strife between employers and employed was kindling into civil war. The Parliament, drawn as it was wholly from the proprietary classes, struggled as fiercely for the mastery of the labourers as it struggled for the mastery of the Crown. The Good Parliament had been as strenuous in demanding the enforcement of the Statute of Labourers as any of its

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*Discontent
of the
people.*

CHAP. III. predecessors. In spite of statutes however the market remained in the labourers' hands. The comfort of the worker rose with his wages. Men who had "no land to live on but their hands disdained to live on penny ale or bacon, and called for fresh flesh or fish, fried or bake, and that hot and hotter for chilling of their maw." But there were dark shades in this general prosperity of the labour class. There were seasons of the year during which employment for the floating mass of labour was hard to find. In the long interval between harvest-tide and harvest-tide work and food were alike scarce in every homestead of the time. Some lines of William Longland give us the picture of a farm of the day. "I have no penny pullets for to buy, nor neither geese nor pigs, but two green cheeses, a few curds and cream, and an oaten cake, and two loaves of beans and bran baked for my children. I have no salt bacon nor no cooked meat collops for to make, but I have parsley and leeks and many cabbage plants, and eke a cow and a calf, and a cart-mare to draw a-field my dung while the drought lasteth, and by this livelihood we must all live till Lammas-tide [August], and by that I hope to have harvest in my croft." But it was not till Lammas-tide that high wages and the new corn bade "Hunger go to sleep," and during the long spring and summer the free labourer and the "waster that will not work but wander about, that will eat no bread but the finest wheat, nor drink but of the best and brownest ale," was a source of social and political danger. "He grieveth him against God and grudgeth against Reason, and then curseth he the King and all his council after such law to allow labourers to grieve." Such a smouldering mass of discontent as this needed but a spark to burst into flame; and the spark was found in the imposition of fresh taxation.

*The
Poll-tax.*

If John of Gaunt was fallen from his old power he was still the leading noble in the realm, and it is possible that dread of the encroachments of the last Parliament on the executive power drew after a time even the new advisers

of the Crown closer to him. Whatever was the cause, he again came to the front. But the supplies voted in the past year were wasted in his hands. A fresh expedition against France under the Duke himself ended in failure before the walls of St. Malo, while at home his brutal household was outraging public order by the murder of a knight who had incurred John's anger in the precincts of Westminster. So great was the resentment of the Londoners at this act that it became needful to summon Parliament elsewhere than to the capital; and in 1378 the Houses met at Gloucester. The Duke succeeded in bringing the lords to refuse those conferences with the Commons which had given unity to the action of the late Parliament, but he was foiled in an attack on the clerical privilege of sanctuary and in the threats which his party still directed against Church property, while the Commons forced the royal Council to lay before them the accounts of the last subsidy and to appoint a commission to examine into the revenue of the Crown. Unhappily the financial policy of the preceding year was persisted in. The check before St. Malo had been somewhat redeemed by treaties with Charles of Evreux and the Duke of Brittany which secured to England the right of holding Cherbourg and Brest; but the cost of these treaties only swelled the expenses of the war. The fresh supplies voted at Gloucester proved insufficient for their purpose, and a Parliament in the spring of 1379 renewed the Poll-tax in a graduated form. But the proceeds of the tax proved miserably inadequate, and when fresh debts beset the Crown in 1380 a return was again made to the old system of subsidies. But these failed in their turn; and at the close of the year the Parliament again fell back on a severer Poll-tax. One of the attractions of the new mode of taxation seems to have been that the clergy, who adopted it for themselves, paid in this way a larger share of the burthens of the state; but the chief ground for its adoption lay, no doubt,

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in its bringing within the net of the tax-gatherer a class which had hitherto escaped him, men such as the free labourer, the village smith, the village tiler. But few courses could have been more dangerous. The poll-tax not only brought the pressure of the war home to every household; it goaded into action precisely the class which was already seething with discontent. The strife between labour and capital was going on as fiercely as ever in country and in town. The landlords were claiming new services, or forcing men who looked on themselves as free to prove they were no villeins by law. The free labourer was struggling against the attempt to exact work from him at low wages. The wandering workman was being seized and branded as a vagrant. The abbey towns were struggling for freedom against the abbeys. The craftsmen within boroughs were carrying on the same strife against employer and craft-gild. And all this mass of discontent was being heightened and organized by agencies with which the government could not cope. The poorer villeins and the free labourers had long since banded together in secret conspiracies which the wealthier villeins supported with money. The return of soldiers from the war threw over the land a host of broken men, skilled in arms, and ready to take part in any rising. The begging friars, wandering and gossiping from village to village and street to street, shared the passions of the class from which they sprang. Priests like Ball openly preached the doctrines of communism. And to these had been recently added a fresh agency which could hardly fail to stir a new excitement. With the practical ability which marked his character Wyclif set on foot about this time a body of poor preachers to supply, as he held, the place of those wealthier clergy who had lost their hold on the land. The coarse sermons, bare feet, and russet dress of these "Simple Priests" moved the laughter of rector and canon, but they proved a rapid and effective means of diffusing Wyclif's protests against the wealth and sluggishness of the clergy, and we can hardly

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John
Ball.

doubt that in the general turmoil their denunciation of ecclesiastical wealth passed often into more general denunciations of the proprietary classes.

As the spring went by quaint rimes passed through the country, and served as a summons to revolt. "John Ball," ran one, "greeteth you all, and doth for to understand he hath rung your bell. Now right and might, will and skill, God speed every dele." "Help truth," ran another, "and truth shall help you! Now reigneth pride in price, and covetise is counted wise, and lechery withouten shame, and gluttony withouten blame. Envy reigneth with treason, and sloth is take in great season. God do bote, for now is tyme!" We recognize Ball's hand in the yet more stirring missives of "Jack the Miller" and "Jack the Carter." "Jack Miller asketh help to turn his mill aright. He hath grounden small, small: the King's Son of Heaven he shall pay for all. Look thy mill go aright with the four sailes, and the post stand with steadfastness. With right and with might, with skill and with will; let might help right, and skill go before will, and right before might, so goeth our mill aright." "Jack Carter," ran the companion missive, "prays you all that ye make a good end of that ye have begun, and do well, and aye better and better: for at the even men heareth the day." "Falseness and guile," sang Jack Trewman, "have reigned too long, and truth hath been set under a lock, and falseness and guile reigneth in every stock. No man may come truth to, but if he sing 'si dederō.' True love is away that was so good, and clerks for wealth work them woe. God do bote, for now is time." In the rude jingle of these lines began for England the literature of political controversy: they are the first predecessors of the pamphlets of Milton and of Burke. Rough as they are, they express clearly enough the mingled passions which met in the revolt of the peasants: their longing for a right rule, for plain and simple justice; their scorn of the immorality of the nobles and the infamy

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of the court; their resentment at the perversion of the law to the cause of oppression.

From the eastern and midland counties the restlessness spread to all England south of the Thames. But the grounds of discontent varied with every district. The actual outbreak began on the 5th of June at Dartford, where a tiler killed one of the collectors of the poll-tax in vengeance for a brutal outrage on his daughter. The county at once rose in arms. Canterbury, where "the whole town was of their mind," threw open its gates to the insurgents who plundered the Archbishop's palace and dragged John Ball from his prison. A hundred thousand Kentishmen gathered round Walter Tyler of Essex and John Hales of Malling to march upon London. Their grievance was mainly a political one. Villeinage was unknown in Kent. As the peasants poured towards Blackheath indeed every lawyer who fell into their hands was put to death; "not till all these were killed would the land enjoy its old freedom again," the Kentishmen shouted as they fired the houses of the stewards and flung the rolls of the manor-courts into the flames. But this action can hardly have been due to anything more than sympathy with the rest of the realm, the sympathy which induced the same men when pilgrims from the north brought news that John of Gaunt was setting free his bondmen to send to the Duke an offer to make him Lord and King of England. Nor was their grievance a religious one. Lollardry can have made little way among men whose grudge against the Archbishop of Canterbury sprang from his discouragement of pilgrimages. Their discontent was simply political; they demanded the suppression of the poll-tax and better government; their aim was to slay the nobles and wealthier clergy, to take the King into their own hands, and pass laws which should seem good to the Commons of the realm. The whole population joined the Kentishmen as they marched along, while the nobles were paralyzed with fear. The young King—he was but

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a boy of sixteen—addressed them from a boat on the river; but the refusal of his Council under the guidance of Archbishop Sudbury to allow him to land kindled the peasants to fury, and with cries of "Treason" the great mass rushed on London. On the 13th of June its gates were flung open by the poorer artizans within the city, and the stately palace of John of Gaunt at the Savoy, the new inn of the lawyers at the Temple, the houses of the foreign merchants, were soon in a blaze. But the insurgents, as they proudly boasted, were "seekers of truth and justice, not thieves or robbers," and a plunderer found carrying off a silver vessel from the sack of the Savoy was flung with his spoil into the flames. Another body of insurgents encamped at the same time to the east of the city. In Essex and the eastern counties the popular discontent was more social than political. The demands of the peasants were that bondage should be abolished, that tolls and imposts on trade should be done away with, that "no acre of land which is held in bondage or villeinage be held at higher rate than fourpence a year," in other words for a money commutation of all villein services. Their rising had been even earlier than that of the Kentishmen. Before Whitsuntide an attempt to levy the poll-tax gathered crowds of peasants together, armed with clubs, rusty swords, and bows. The royal commissioners who were sent to repress the tumult were driven from the field, and the Essex men marched upon London on one side of the river as the Kentishmen marched on the other. The evening of the thirteenth, the day on which Tyler entered the city, saw them encamped without its walls at Mile-end. At the same moment Highbury and the northern heights were occupied by the men of Hertfordshire and the villeins of St. Alban's, where a strife between abbot and town had been going on since the days of Edward the Second.

The royal Council with the young King had taken refuge in the Tower, and their aim seems to have been to

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the
Second.*

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divide the forces of the insurgents. On the morning of the fourteenth therefore Richard rode from the Tower to Mile-end to meet the Essex men. "I am your King and Lord, good people," the boy began with a fearlessness which marked his bearing throughout the crisis, "what will you?" "We will that you free us for ever," shouted the peasants, "us and our lands; and that we be never named nor held for serfs!" "I grant it," replied Richard; and he bade them go home, pledging himself at once to issue charters of freedom and amnesty. A shout of joy welcomed the promise. Throughout the day more than thirty clerks were busied writing letters of pardon and emancipation, and with these the mass of the Essex men and the men of Hertfordshire withdrew quietly to their homes. But while the King was successful at Mile-end a terrible doom had fallen on the councillors he left behind him. Richard had hardly quitted the Tower when the Kentishmen who had spent the night within the city appeared at its gates. The general terror was shown ludicrously enough when they burst in and taking the panic-stricken knights of the royal household in rough horse-play by the beard promised to be their equals and good comrades in the days to come. But the horse-play changed into dreadful earnest when they found that Richard had escaped their grasp, and the discovery of Archbishop Sudbury and other ministers in the chapel changed their fury into a cry for blood. The Primate was dragged from his sanctuary and beheaded. The same vengeance was wreaked on the Treasurer and the Chief Commissioner for the levy of the hated poll-tax, the merchant Richard Lyons who had been impeached by the Good Parliament. Richard meanwhile had ridden round the northern wall of the city to the Wardrobe near Blackfriars, and from this new refuge he opened his negotiations with the Kentish insurgents. Many of these dispersed at the news of the King's pledge to the men of Essex, but a body of thirty thousand still surrounded

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Wat Tyler when Richard on the morning of the fifteenth encountered that leader by a mere chance at Smithfield. Hot words passed between his train and the peasant chieftain who advanced to confer with the King, and a threat from Tyler brought on a brief struggle in which the Mayor of London, William Walworth, struck him with his dagger to the ground. "Kill! kill!" shouted the crowd, "they have slain our captain!" But Richard faced the Kentishmen with the same cool courage with which he faced the men of Essex. "What need ye, my masters!" cried the boy-king as he rode boldly up to the front of the bowmen. "I am your Captain and your King; Follow me!" The hopes of the peasants centred in the young sovereign; one aim of their rising had been to free him from the evil counsellors who, as they believed, abused his youth; and at his word they followed him with a touching loyalty and trust till he entered the Tower. His mother welcomed him within its walls with tears of joy. "Rejoice and praise God," Richard answered, "for I have recovered to-day my heritage which was lost and the realm of England!" But he was compelled to give the same pledge of freedom to the Kentishmen as at Mile-end, and it was only after receiving his letters of pardon and emancipation that the yeomen dispersed to their homes.

The revolt indeed was far from being at an end. As the news of the rising ran through the country the discontent almost everywhere broke into flame. There were outbreaks in every shire south of the Thames as far westward as Devonshire. In the north tumults broke out at Beverley and Scarborough, and Yorkshire and Lancashire made ready to rise. The eastern counties were in one wild turmoil of revolt. At Cambridge the townsmen burned the charters of the University and attacked the colleges. A body of peasants occupied St. Alban's. In Norfolk a Norwich artizan, called John the Litster or Dyer, took the title of King of the Commons, and marching

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through the country at the head of a mass of peasants compelled the nobles whom he captured to act as his meat-tasters and to serve him on their knees during his repast. The story of St. Edmundsbury shows us what was going on in Suffolk. Ever since the accession of Edward the Third the townsmen and the villeins of their lands around had been at war with the abbot and his monks. The old and more oppressive servitude had long passed away, but the later abbots had set themselves against the policy of concession and conciliation which had brought about this advance towards freedom. The gates of the town were still in the abbot's hands. He had succeeded in enforcing his claim to the wardship of all orphans born within his domain. From claims such as these the town could never feel itself safe so long as mysterious charters from Pope or King, interpreted cunningly by the wit of the new lawyer class, lay stored in the abbey archives. But the archives contained other and hardly less formidable documents than these. Untroubled by the waste of war, the religious houses profited more than any other landowners by the general growth of wealth. They had become great proprietors, money lenders to their tenants, extortionate as the Jew whom they had banished from their land. There were few townsmen of St. Edmund's who had not some bonds laid up in the abbey registry. In 1327 one band of debtors had a covenant lying there for the payment of five hundred marks and fifty casks of wine. Another company of the wealthier burgesses were joint debtors on a bond for ten thousand pounds. The new spirit of commercial activity joined with the troubles of the time to throw the whole community into the abbot's hands.

Saint
Edmunds-
bury.

We can hardly wonder that riots, lawsuits, and royal commissions marked the relation of the town and abbey under the first two Edwards. Under the third came an open conflict. In 1327 the townsmen burst into the great house, drove the monks into the choir, and dragged them thence to the town prison. The abbey itself was sacked;

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chalices, missals, chasubles, tunics, altar frontals, the books of the library, the very vats and dishes of the kitchen, all disappeared. The monks estimated their losses at ten thousand pounds. But the townsmen aimed at higher booty than this. The monks were brought back from prison to their own chapter-house, and the spoil of their registry, papal bulls and royal charters, deeds and bonds and mortgages, were laid before them. Amidst the wild threats of the mob they were forced to execute a grant of perfect freedom and of a gild to the town as well as of free release to their debtors. Then they were left masters of the ruined house. But all control over town or land was gone. Through spring and summer no rent or fine was paid. The bailiffs and other officers of the abbey did not dare to show their faces in the streets. News came at last that the abbot was in London, appealing for redress to the court, and the whole county was at once on fire. A crowd of rustics, maddened at the thought of revived claims of serfage, of interminable suits of law, poured into the streets of the town. From thirty-two of the neighbouring villages the priests marched at the head of their flocks as on a new crusade. The wild mass of men, women, and children, twenty thousand in all, as men guessed, rushed again on the abbey, and for four November days the work of destruction went on unhindered. When gate, stables, granaries, kitchen, infirmary, hostelry had gone up in flames, the multitude swept away to the granges and barns of the abbey farms. Their plunder shows what vast agricultural proprietors the monks had become. A thousand horses, a hundred and twenty plough-oxen, two hundred cows, three hundred bullocks, three hundred hogs, ten thousand sheep were driven off, and granges and barns burned to the ground. It was judged afterwards that sixty thousand pounds would hardly cover the loss.

Weak as was the government of Mortimer and
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Isabella, the appeal of the abbot against this outrage was promptly heeded. A royal force quelled the riot, thirty carts full of prisoners were despatched to Norwich; twenty-four of the chief townsmen with thirty-two of the village priests were convicted as aiders and abettors of the attack on the abbey, and twenty were summarily hanged. Nearly two hundred persons remained under sentence of outlawry, and for five weary years their case dragged on in the King's courts. At last matters ended in a ludicrous outrage. Irritated by repeated breaches of promise on the abbot's part, the outlawed burgesses seized him as he lay in his manor of Chevington, robbed and bound him, and carried him off to London. There he was hurried from street to street lest his hiding-place should be detected till opportunity offered for shipping him off to Brabant. The Primate and the Pope levelled their excommunications against the abbot's captors in vain, and though he was at last discovered and brought home it was probably with some pledge of the arrangement which followed in 1332. The enormous damages assessed by the royal justices were remitted, the outlawry of the townsmen was reversed, the prisoners were released. On the other hand the deeds which had been stolen were again replaced in the archives of the abbey, and the charters which had been extorted from the monks were formally cancelled.

St.
Edmunds-
bury in
1381.

The spirit of townsmen and villeins remained crushed by their failure, and throughout the reign of Edward the Third the oppression against which they had risen went on without a check. It was no longer the rough blow of sheer force; it was the more delicate but more pitiless tyranny of the law. At Richard's accession Prior John of Cambridge in the vacancy of the abbot was in charge of the house. The prior was a man skilled in all the arts of his day. In sweetness of voice, in knowledge of sacred song, his eulogists pronounced him superior to Orpheus, to Nero, and to one yet more illustrious in the Bury cloister though obscure to us, the Breton Belgabred. John was

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"industrious and subtle," and subtlety and industry found their scope in suit after suit with the burgesses and farmers around him. "Faithfully he strove" says the monastic chronicler "with the villeins of Bury for the rights of his house." The townsmen he owned specially as his "adversaries," but it was the rustics who were to show what a hate he had won. On the fifteenth of June, the day of Wat Tyler's fall, the howl of a great multitude round his manor house at Mildenhall broke roughly on the chauntings of Prior John. He strove to fly, but he was betrayed by his own servants, judged in rude mockery of the law by villein and bondsman, condemned and killed. The corpse lay naked in the open field while the mob poured unresisted into Bury. Bearing the prior's head on a lance before them through the streets, the frenzied throng at last reached the gallows where the head of one of the royal judges, Sir John Cavendish, was already impaled; and pressing the cold lips together in mockery of their friendship set them side by side. Another head soon joined them. The abbey gates were burst open, and the cloister filled with a maddened crowd, howling for a new victim, John Lackenheath, the warder of the barony. Few knew him as he stood among the group of trembling monks, but he courted death with a contemptuous courage. "I am the man you seek," he said, stepping forward; and in a minute, with a mighty roar of "Devil's son! Monk! Traitor!" he was swept to the gallows, and his head hacked from his shoulders. Then the crowd rolled back again to the abbey gate, and summoned the monks before them. They told them that now for a long time they had oppressed their fellows, the burgesses of Bury; wherefore they willed that in the sight of the Commons they should forthwith surrender their bonds and charters. The monks brought the parchments to the market-place; many which were demanded they swore they could not find. A compromise was at last patched up; and it was agreed that the charters should be surrendered till the future abbot

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should confirm the liberties of the town. Then, unable to do more, the crowd ebbed away.

A scene less violent, but even more picturesque, went on the same day at St. Alban's. William Grindecobbe, the leader of its townsmen, returned with one of the charters of emancipation which Richard had granted after his interview at Mile-end to the men of Essex and Hertfordshire, and breaking into the abbey precincts at the head of the burghers, forced the abbot to deliver up the charters which bound the town in bondage to his house. But a more striking proof of servitude than any charters could give remained in the mill-stones which after a long suit at law had been adjudged to the abbey and placed within its cloister as a triumphant witness that no townsman might grind corn within the domain of the abbey save at the abbot's mill. Bursting into the cloister, the burghers now tore the mill-stones from the floor, and broke them into small pieces, "like blessed bread in church," which each might carry off to show something of the day when their freedom was won again. But it was hardly won when it was lost anew. The quiet withdrawal and dispersion of the peasant armies with their charters of emancipation gave courage to the nobles. Their panic passed away. The warlike Bishop of Norwich fell lance in hand on Litster's camp, and scattered the peasants of Norfolk at the first shock. Richard with an army of forty thousand men marched in triumph through Kent and Essex, and spread terror by the ruthlessness of his executions. At Waltham he was met by the display of his own recent charters and a protest from the Essex men that "they were so far as freedom went the peers of their lords." But they were to learn the worth of a king's word. "Villeins you were," answered Richard, "and villeins you are. In bondage you shall abide, and that not your old bondage, but a worse!" The stubborn resistance which he met showed that the temper of the people was not easily broken. The villagers of

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Billericay threw themselves into the woods and fought two hard fights before they were reduced to submission. It was only by threats of death that verdicts of guilty could be wrung from Essex jurors when the leaders of the revolt were brought before them. Grindecobbe was offered his life if he would persuade his followers at St. Alban's to restore the charters they had wrung from the monks. He turned bravely to his fellow-townsmen and bade them take no thought for his trouble. "If I die," he said, "I shall die for the cause of the freedom we have won, counting myself happy to end my life by such a martyrdom. Do then to-day as you would have done had I been killed yesterday." But repression went pitilessly on, and through the summer and the autumn seven thousand men are said to have perished on the gallows or the field.

CHAPTER IV.

RICHARD THE SECOND.

1381—1400.

Results of the Peasant Revolt. TERRIBLE as were the measures of repression which followed the Peasant Revolt, and violent as was the passion of reaction which raged among the proprietary classes at its close, the end of the rising was in fact secured. The words of Grindecobbe ere his death were a prophecy which time fulfilled. Cancel charters of manumission as the council might, serfage was henceforth a doomed and perishing thing. The dread of another outbreak hung round the employer. The attempts to bring back obsolete services quietly died away. The old process of enfranchisement went quietly on. During the century and a half which followed the Peasant Revolt villeinage died out so rapidly that it became a rare and antiquated thing. The class of small freeholders sprang fast out of the wreck of it into numbers and importance. In twenty years more they were in fact recognized as the basis of our electoral system in every English county. The Labour Statutes proved as ineffective as of old in enchaining labour or reducing its price. A hundred years after the Black Death the wages of an English labourer was sufficient to purchase twice the amount of the necessaries of life which could have been obtained for the wages paid under Edward the Third. The incidental descriptions of the life of the working classes which we find in Piers Ploughman show that this increase of social comfort

had been going on even during the troubled period which preceded the outbreak of the peasants, and it went on faster after the revolt was over. But inevitable as such a progress was, every step of it was taken in the teeth of the wealthier classes. Their temper indeed at the close of the rising was that of men frenzied by panic and the taste of blood. They scouted all notion of concession. The stubborn will of the conquered was met by as stubborn a will in their conquerors. The royal Council showed its sense of the danger of a mere policy of resistance by submitting the question of enfranchisement to the Parliament which assembled in November 1381 with words which suggested a compromise. "If you desire to enfranchise and set at liberty the said serfs," ran the royal message, "by your common assent, as the King has been informed that some of you desire, he will consent to your prayer." But no thoughts of compromise influenced the landowners in their reply. The King's grant and letters, the Parliament answered with perfect truth, were legally null and void: their serfs were their goods, and the King could not take their goods from them but by their own consent. "And this consent," they ended, "we have never given and never will give, were we all to die in one day." Their temper indeed expressed itself in legislation which was a fit sequel to the Statutes of Labourers. They forbade the child of any tiller of the soil to be apprenticed in a town. They prayed the King to ordain "that no bondman nor bondwoman shall place their children at school, as has been done, so as to advance their children in the world by their going into the church." The new colleges which were being founded at the Universities at this moment closed their gates upon villeins.

The panic which produced this frenzied reaction against all projects of social reform produced inevitably as frenzied a panic of reaction against all plans for religious reform. Wyclif had been supported by the Lancastrian party till the very eve of the Peasant Revolt. But with the rising

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Religious
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CHAP. IV. his whole work seemed suddenly undone. The quarrel between the baronage and the Church on which his political action had as yet been grounded was hushed in the presence of a common danger. His "poor preachers" were looked upon as missionaries of socialism. The friars charged Wyclif with being a "sower of strife, who by his serpentlike instigation had set the serf against his lord," and though he tossed back the charge with disdain he had to bear a suspicion which was justified by the conduct of some of his followers. John Ball, who had figured in the front rank of the revolt, was falsely named as one of his adherents, and was alleged to have denounced in his last hour the conspiracy of the "Wyclifites." Wyclif's most prominent scholar, Nicholas Herford, was said to have openly approved the brutal murder of Archbishop Sudbury. Whatever belief such charges might gain, it is certain that from this moment all plans for the reorganization of the Church were confounded in the general odium which attached to the projects of the peasant leaders, and that any hope of ecclesiastical reform at the hands of the baronage and the Parliament was at an end. But even if the Peasant Revolt had not deprived Wyclif of the support of the aristocratic party with whom he had hitherto co-operated, their alliance must have been dissolved by the new theological position which he had already taken up. Some months before the outbreak of the insurrection he had by one memorable step passed from the position of a reformer of the discipline and political relations of the Church to that of a protester against its cardinal beliefs. If there was one doctrine upon which the supremacy of the Mediæval Church rested, it was the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It was by his exclusive right to the performance of the miracle which was wrought in the mass that the lowliest priest was raised high above princes. With the formal denial of the doctrine of Transubstantiation which Wyclif issued in the spring of 1381 began that great movement of religious revolt which ended more than

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a century after in the establishment of religious freedom by severing the mass of the Teutonic peoples from the general body of the Catholic Church. The act was the bolder that he stood utterly alone. The University of Oxford, in which his influence had been hitherto all-powerful, at once condemned him. John of Gaunt enjoined him to be silent. Wyclif was presiding as Doctor of Divinity over some disputations in the schools of the Augustinian Canons when his academical condemnation was publicly read, but though startled for the moment he at once challenged Chancellor or doctor to disprove the conclusions at which he had arrived. The prohibition of the Duke of Lancaster he met by an open avowal of his teaching, a confession which closes proudly with the quiet words, "I believe that in the end the truth will conquer."

For the moment his courage dispelled the panic around him. The University responded to his appeal, and by displacing his opponents from office tacitly adopted his cause. But Wyclif no longer looked for support to the learned or wealthier classes on whom he had hitherto relied. He appealed, and the appeal is memorable as the first of such a kind in our history, to England at large. With an amazing industry he issued tract after tract in the tongue of the people itself. The dry, syllogistic Latin, the abstruse and involved argument which the great doctor had addressed to his academic hearers, were suddenly flung aside, and by a transition which marks the wonderful genius of the man the schoolman was transformed into the pamphleteer. If Chaucer is the father of our later English poetry, Wyclif is the father of our later English prose. The rough, clear, homely English of his tracts, the speech of the ploughman and the trader of the day though coloured with the picturesque phraseology of the Bible, is in its literary use as distinctly a creation of his own as the style in which he embodied it, the terse vehement sentences, the stinging sarcasms, the hard antitheses which roused the dullest mind like a whip. Once fairly freed

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from the trammels of unquestioning belief, Wyclif's mind worked fast in its career of scepticism. Pardons, indulgences, absolutions, pilgrimages to the shrines of the saints, worship of their images, worship of the saints themselves, were successively denied. A formal appeal to the Bible as the one ground of faith, coupled with an assertion of the right of every instructed man to examine the Bible for himself, threatened the very groundwork of the older dogmatism with ruin. Nor were these daring denials confined to the small circle of scholars who still clung to him. The "Simple Priests" were active in the diffusion of their master's doctrines, and how rapid their progress must have been we may see from the panic-struck exaggerations of their opponents. A few years later they complained that the followers of Wyclif abounded everywhere and in all classes, among the baronage, in the cities, among the peasantry of the country-side, even in the monastic cell itself. "Every second man one meets is a Lollard."

Lollardry
at
Oxford.

"Lollard," a word which probably means "idle babbler," was the nickname of scorn with which the orthodox Churchmen chose to insult their assailants. But this rapid increase changed their scorn into vigorous action. In 1382 Courtenay, who had now become Archbishop, summoned a council at Blackfriars and formally submitted twenty-four propositions drawn from Wyclif's works. An earthquake in the midst of the proceedings terrified every prelate but the resolute Primate; the expulsion of ill humours from the earth, he said, was of good omen for the expulsion of ill humours from the Church; and the condemnation was pronounced. Then the Archbishop turned fiercely upon Oxford as the fount and centre of the new heresies. In an English sermon at St. Frideswide's Nicholas Herford had asserted the truth of Wyclif's doctrines, and Courtenay ordered the Chancellor to silence him and his adherents on pain of being himself treated as a heretic. The Chancellor fell back on the liberties of the

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University, and appointed as preacher another Wyclifite, Repyngdon, who did not hesitate to style the Lollards "holy priests," and to affirm that they were protected by John of Gaunt. Party spirit meanwhile ran high among the students. The bulk of them sided with the Lollard leaders, and a Carmelite, Peter Stokes, who had procured the Archbishop's letters, cowered panic stricken in his chamber while the Chancellor, protected by an escort of a hundred townsmen, listened approvingly to Repyngdon's defiance. "I dare go no further," wrote the poor Friar to the Archbishop, "for fear of death;" but he mustered courage at last to descend into the schools where Repyngdon was now maintaining that the clerical order was "better when it was but nine years old than now that it has grown to a thousand years and more." The appearance however of scholars in arms again drove Stokes to fly in despair to Lambeth, while a new heretic in open Congregation maintained Wyclif's denial of Transubstantiation. "There is no idolatry," cried William James, "save in the Sacrament of the Altar." "You speak like a wise man," replied the Chancellor, Robert Rygge. Courtenay however was not the man to bear defiance tamely, and his summons to Lambeth wrested a submission from Rygge which was only accepted on his pledge to suppress the Lollardism of the University. "I dare not publish them, on fear of death," exclaimed the Chancellor when Courtenay handed him his letters of condemnation. "Then is your University an open *fautor* of heretics" retorted the Primate "if it suffers not the Catholic truth to be proclaimed within its bounds." The royal Council supported the Archbishop's injunction, but the publication of the decrees at once set Oxford on fire. The scholars threatened death against the friars, "crying that they wished to destroy the University." The masters suspended Henry Crump from teaching as a troubler of the public peace for calling the Lollards "heretics." The Crown however at last stepped in to Courtenay's aid, and a royal writ ordered the

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instant banishment of all favourers of Wyclif with the seizure and destruction of all Lollard books on pain of forfeiture of the University's privileges. The threat produced its effect. Herford and Repyngdon appealed in vain to John of Gaunt for protection; the Duke himself denounced them as heretics against the Sacrament of the Altar, and after much evasion they were forced to make a formal submission. Within Oxford itself the suppression of Lollardism was complete, but with the death of religious freedom all trace of intellectual life suddenly disappears. The century which followed the triumph of Courtenay is the most barren in its annals, nor was the sleep of the University broken till the advent of the New Learning restored to it some of the life and liberty which the Primate had so roughly trodden out.

Wyclif's
Bible.

Nothing marks more strongly the grandeur of Wyclif's position as the last of the great schoolmen than the reluctance of so bold a man as Courtenay even after his triumph over Oxford to take extreme measures against the head of Lollardry. Wyclif, though summoned, had made no appearance before the "Council of the Earthquake." "Pontius Pilate and Herod are made friends to-day," was his bitter comment on the new union which proved to have sprung up between the prelates and the monastic orders who had so long been at variance with each other; "since they have made a heretic of Christ, it is an easy inference for them to count simple Christians heretics." He seems indeed to have been sick at the moment, but the announcement of the final sentence roused him to life again. He petitioned the King and Parliament that he might be allowed freely to prove the doctrines he had put forth, and turning with characteristic energy to the attack of his assailants, he asked that all religious vows might be suppressed, that tithes might be diverted to the maintenance of the poor and the clergy maintained by the free alms of their flocks, that the Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire might be enforced

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against the Papacy, that Churchmen might be declared incapable of secular offices, and imprisonment for excommunication cease. Finally in the teeth of the council's condemnation he demanded that the doctrine of the Eucharist which he advocated might be freely taught. If he appeared in the following year before the convocation at Oxford it was to perplex his opponents by a display of scholastic logic which permitted him to retire without any retraction of his sacramental heresy. For the time his opponents seemed satisfied with his expulsion from the University, but in his retirement at Lutterworth he was forging during these troubled years the great weapon which, wielded by other hands than his own, was to produce so terrible an effect on the triumphant hierarchy. An earlier translation of the Scriptures, in part of which he was aided by his scholar Herford, was being revised and brought to the second form which is better known as "Wyclif's Bible" when death drew near. The appeal of the prelates to Rome was answered at last by a Brief ordering him to appear at the Papal Court. His failing strength exhausted itself in a sarcastic reply which explained that his refusal to comply with the summons simply sprang from broken health. "I am always glad," ran the ironical answer, "to explain my faith to any one, and above all to the Bishop of Rome; for I take it for granted that if it be orthodox he will confirm it, if it be erroneous he will correct it. I assume too that as chief Vicar of Christ upon earth the Bishop of Rome is of all mortal men most bound to the law of Christ's Gospel, for among the disciples of Christ a majority is not reckoned by simply counting heads in the fashion of this world, but according to the imitation of Christ on either side. Now Christ during His life upon earth was of all men the poorest, casting from Him all worldly authority. I deduce from these premisses as a simple counsel of my own that the Pope should surrender all temporal authority to the civil power and advise his clergy to do the same." The boldness of his

CHAP. IV. words sprang perhaps from a knowledge that his end was near. The terrible strain on energies enfeebled by age and study had at last brought its inevitable result, and a stroke of paralysis while Wyclif was hearing mass in his parish church of Lutterworth was followed on the next day by his death.

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*The
Lollard
movement.*

The persecution of Courtenay deprived the religious reform of its more learned adherents and of the support of the Universities. Wyclif's death robbed it of its head at a moment when little had been done save a work of destruction. From that moment Lollardism ceased to be in any sense an organized movement and crumbled into a general spirit of revolt. All the religious and social discontent of the times floated instinctively to this new centre. The socialist dreams of the peasantry, the new and keener spirit of personal morality, the hatred of the friars, the jealousy of the great lords towards the prelacy, the fanaticism of the reforming zealot were blended together in a common hostility to the Church and a common resolve to substitute personal religion for its dogmatic and ecclesiastical system. But it was this want of organization, this looseness and fluidity of the new movement, that made it penetrate through every class of society. Women as well as men became the preachers of the new sect. Lollardry had its own schools, its own books; its pamphlets were passed everywhere from hand to hand; scurrilous ballads which revived the old attacks of "Goliath" in the Angevin times upon the wealth and luxury of the clergy were sung at every corner. Nobles like the Earl of Salisbury and at a later time Sir John Oldcastle placed themselves openly at the head of the cause and threw open their gates as a refuge for its missionaries. London in its hatred of the clergy became fiercely Lollard, and defended a Lollard preacher who ventured to advocate the new doctrines from the pulpit of St. Paul's. One of its mayors, John of Northampton, showed the influence of the new morality by the Puritan

spirit in which he dealt with the morals of the city. Compelled to act, as he said, by the remissness of the clergy who connived for money at every kind of debauchery, he arrested the loose women, cut off their hair, and carted them through the streets as objects of public scorn. But the moral spirit of the new movement, though infinitely its grander side, was less dangerous to the Church than its open repudiation of the older doctrines and systems of Christendom. Out of the floating mass of opinion which bore the name of Lollardry one faith gradually evolved itself, a faith in the sole authority of the Bible as a source of religious truth. The translation of Wyclif did its work. Scripture, complains a canon of Leicester, "became a vulgar thing, and more open to lay folk and women that knew how to read than it is wont to be to clerks themselves." Consequences which Wyclif had perhaps shrunk from drawing were boldly drawn by his disciples. The Church was declared to have become apostate, its priesthood was denounced as no priesthood, its sacraments as idolatry.

It was in vain that the clergy attempted to stifle the new movement by their old weapon of persecution. The jealousy entertained by the baronage and gentry of every pretension of the Church to secular power foiled its efforts to make persecution effective. At the moment of the Peasant Revolt Courtenay procured the enactment of a statute which commissioned the sheriffs to seize all persons convicted before the bishops of preaching heresy. But the statute was repealed in the next session, and the Commons added to the bitterness of the blow by their protest that they considered it "in nowise their interest to be more under the jurisdiction of the prelates or more bound by them than their ancestors had been in times past." Heresy indeed was still a felony by the common law, and if as yet we meet with no instances of the punishment of heretics by the fire it was because the threat of such a death was commonly followed by the recantation of the Lollard. But the restriction of each bishop's jurisdiction within the

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limits of his own diocese made it impossible to arrest the wandering preachers of the new doctrine, and the civil punishment—even if it had been sanctioned by public opinion—seems to have long fallen into desuetude. Experience proved to the prelates that few sheriffs would arrest on the mere warrant of an ecclesiastical officer, and that no royal court would issue the writ “for the burning of a heretic” on a bishop’s requisition. But powerless as the efforts of the Church were for purposes of repression, they were effective in rousing the temper of the Lollards into a bitter fanaticism. The heretics delighted in outraging the religious sense of their day. One Lollard gentleman took home the sacramental wafer and lunched on it with wine and oysters. Another flung some images of the saints into his cellar. The Lollard preachers stirred up riots by the virulence of their preaching against the friars. But they directed even fiercer invectives against the wealth and secularity of the great Churchmen. In a formal petition which was laid before Parliament in 1395 they mingled denunciations of the riches of the clergy with an open profession of disbelief in transubstantiation, priesthood, pilgrimages, and image worship, and a demand, which illustrates the strange medley of opinions which jostled together in the new movement, that war might be declared unchristian and that trades such as those of the goldsmith or the armourer, which were contrary to apostolical poverty, might be banished from the realm. They contended (and it is remarkable that a Parliament of the next reign adopted the statement) that from the superfluous revenues of the Church, if once they were applied to purposes of general utility, the King might maintain fifteen earls, fifteen hundred knights, and six thousand squires, besides endowing a hundred hospitals for the relief of the poor.

Disasters
of the
War.

The distress of the landowners, the general disorganization of the country, in every part of which bands of marauders were openly defying the law, the panic of the Church and

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of society at large as the projects of the Lollards shaped themselves into more daring and revolutionary forms, added a fresh keenness to the national discontent at the languid and inefficient prosecution of the war. The junction of the French and Spanish fleets had made them masters of the seas, and what fragments were left of Guienne lay at their mercy. The royal Council strove to detach the House of Luxemburg from the French alliance by winning for Richard the hand of Anne, a daughter of the late Emperor Charles the Fourth who had fled at Crécy, and sister of King Wenzel of Bohemia who was now King of the Romans. But the marriage remained without political result, save that the Lollard books which were sent into their native country by the Bohemian servants of the new queen stirred the preaching of John Huss and the Hussite wars. Nor was English policy more successful in Flanders. Under Philip van Artevelde, the son of the leader of 1345, the Flemish towns again sought the friendship of England against France, but at the close of 1382 the towns were defeated and their leader slain in the great French victory of Rosbecque. An expedition to Flanders in the following year under the warlike Bishop of Norwich turned out a mere plunder-raid and ended in utter failure. A short truce only gave France the leisure to prepare a counter-blow by the despatch of a small but well-equipped force under John de Vienne to Scotland in 1385. Thirty thousand Scots joined in the advance of this force over the border: and though northern England rose with a desperate effort and an English army penetrated as far as Edinburgh in the hope of bringing the foe to battle it was forced to fall back without an encounter. Meanwhile France dealt a more terrible blow in the reduction of Ghent. The one remaining market for English commerce was thus closed up, while the forces which should have been employed in saving Ghent and in the protection of the English shores against the threat of invasion were squandered by John of Gaunt in a war which he was

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carrying on along the Spanish frontier in pursuit of the visionary crown which he claimed in his wife's right. The enterprize showed that the Duke had now abandoned the hope of directing affairs at home and was seeking a new sphere of activity abroad. To drive him from the realm had been from the close of the Peasant Revolt the steady purpose of the councillors who now surrounded the young King, of his favourite Robert de Vere and his Chancellor Michael de la Pole, who was raised in 1385 to the Earldom of Suffolk. The Duke's friends were expelled from office; John of Northampton, the head of his adherents among the Commons, was thrown into prison; the Duke himself was charged with treason and threatened with arrest. In 1386 John of Gaunt abandoned the struggle and sailed for Spain.

*Temper of
the Court.*

Richard himself took part in these measures against the Duke. He was now twenty, handsome and golden-haired, with a temper capable of great actions and sudden bursts of energy but indolent and unequal. The conception of kingship in which he had been reared made him regard the constitutional advance which had gone on during the war as an invasion of the rights of his Crown. He looked on the nomination of the royal Council and the great officers of state by the two Houses or the supervision of the royal expenditure by the Commons as infringements on the prerogative which only the pressure of the war and the weakness of a minority had forced the Crown to bow to. The judgement of his councillors was one with that of the King. Vere was no mere royal favourite; he was a great noble and of ancient lineage. Michael de la Pole was a man of large fortune and an old servant of the Crown; he had taken part in the war for thirty years, and had been admiral and captain of Calais. But neither were men to counsel the young King wisely in his effort to obtain independence at once of Parliament and of the great nobles. His first aim had been to break the pressure of the royal house itself, and in his encounter with John

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of Gaunt he had proved successful. But the departure of the Duke of Lancaster only called to the front his brother and his son. Thomas of Woodstock, the Duke of Gloucester, had inherited much of the lands and the influence of the old house of Bohun. Round Henry, Earl of Derby, the son of John of Gaunt by Blanche of Lancaster, the old Lancastrian party of constitutional opposition was once more forming itself. The favour shown to the followers of Wyclif at the Court threw on the side of this new opposition the bulk of the bishops and Churchmen. Richard himself showed no sympathy with the Lollards, but the action of her Bohemian servants shows the tendencies of his Queen. Three members of the royal Council were patrons of the Lollards, and the Earl of Salisbury, a favourite with the King, was their avowed head. The Commons displayed no hostility to the Lollards nor any zeal for the Church; but the lukewarm prosecution of the war, the profuse expenditure of the Court, and above all the manifest will of the King to free himself from Parliamentary control, estranged the Lower House. Richard's haughty words told their own tale. When the Parliament of 1385 called for an enquiry every year into the royal household, the King replied he would enquire when he pleased. When it prayed to know the names of the officers of state, he answered that he would change them at his will.

The burthen of such answers and of the policy they revealed fell on the royal councillors, and the departure of John of Gaunt forced the new opposition into vigorous action. The Parliament of 1386 called for the removal of Suffolk. Richard replied that he would not for such a prayer dismiss a turnspit of his kitchen. The Duke of Gloucester and Bishop Arundel of Ely were sent by the Houses as their envoys, and warned the King that should a ruler refuse to govern with the advice of his lords and by mad counsels work out his private purposes it was lawful to depose him. The threat secured Suffolk's

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Appellant.*

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removal; he was impeached for corruption and maladministration, and condemned to forfeiture and imprisonment. It was only by submitting to the nomination of a Continual Council, with the Duke of Gloucester at its head, that Richard could obtain a grant of subsidies. But the Houses were no sooner broken up than Suffolk was released, and in 1387 the young King rode through the country calling on the sheriffs to raise men against the barons, and bidding them suffer no knight of the shire to be returned for the next Parliament "save one whom the King and his Council chose." The general ill-will foiled both his efforts: and he was forced to take refuge in an opinion of five of the judges that the Continual Council was unlawful, the sentence on Suffolk erroneous, and that the Lords and Commons had no power to remove a King's servant. Gloucester answered the challenge by taking up arms, and a general refusal to fight for the King forced Richard once more to yield. A terrible vengeance was taken on his supporters in the recent schemes. In the Parliament of 1388 Gloucester, with the four Earls of Derby, Arundel, Warwick, and Nottingham appealed on a charge of high treason Suffolk and De Vere, the Archbishop of York, the Chief Justice Tresilian, and Sir Nicholas Bramber. The first two fled, Suffolk to France, De Vere after a skirmish at Radcot Bridge to Ireland; but the Archbishop was deprived of his see, Bramber beheaded, and Tresilian hanged. The five judges were banished, and Sir Simon Burley with three other members of the royal household sent to the block.

Richard's
rule.

At the prayer of the "Wonderful Parliament," as some called this assembly, or as others with more justice "The Merciless Parliament," it was provided that all officers of state should henceforth be named in Parliament or by the Continual Council. Gloucester remained at the head of the latter body, but his power lasted hardly a year. In May 1389 Richard found himself strong enough to break down the government by a word. Entering the Council

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he suddenly asked his uncle how old he was. "Your highness," answered Gloucester, "is in your twenty-second year!" "Then I am old enough to manage my own affairs," said Richard coolly; "I have been longer under guardianship than any ward in my realm. I thank you for your past services, my lords, but I need them no more." The resolution was welcomed by the whole country; and Richard justified the country's hopes by wielding his new power with singular wisdom and success. He refused to recall de Vere or the five judges. The intercession of John of Gaunt on his return from Spain brought about a full reconciliation with the Lords Appellant. A truce was concluded with France, and its renewal year after year enabled the King to lighten the burthen of taxation. Richard announced his purpose to govern by advice of Parliament; he soon restored the Lords Appellant to his Council, and committed the chief offices of state to great Churchmen like Wykeham and Arundel. A series of statutes showed the activity of the Houses. A Statute of Provisors which re-enacted those of Edward the Third was passed in 1390; the Statute of Præmunire, which punished the obtaining of bulls or other instruments from Rome with forfeiture, in 1393. The lords were bridled anew by a Statute of Maintenance, which forbade their violently supporting other men's causes in courts of justice or giving "livery" to a host of retainers. The Statute of Uses in 1391, which rendered illegal the devices which had been invented to frustrate that of Mortmain, showed the same resolve to deal firmly with the Church. A reform of the staple and other mercantile enactments proved the King's care for tradé. Throughout the legislation of these eight years we see the same tone of coolness and moderation. Eager as he was to win the good-will of the Parliament and the Church, Richard refused to bow to the panic of the landowners or to second the persecution of the priesthood. The demands of the Parliament that education should be denied to the sons

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*French
and
English.*

of villeins was refused. Lollardry as a social danger was held firmly at bay, and in 1387 the King ordered Lollard books to be seized and brought before the Council. But the royal officers showed little zeal in aiding the bishops to seize or punish the heretical teachers.

It was in the period of peace which was won for the country by the wisdom and decision of its young King that England listened to the voice of her first great singer. The work of Chaucer marks the final settlement of the English tongue. The close of the great movement towards national unity which had been going on ever since the Conquest was shown in the middle of the fourteenth century by the disuse, even amongst the nobler classes, of the French tongue. In spite of the efforts of the grammar schools and of the strength of fashion English won its way throughout the reign of Edward the Third to its final triumph in that of his grandson. It was ordered to be used in courts of law in 1362 "because the French tongue is much unknown," and in the following year it was employed by the Chancellor in opening Parliament. Bishops began to preach in English, and the English tracts of Wyclif made it once more a literary tongue. We see the general advance in two passages from writers of Edward's and Richard's reigns. "Children in school" says Higden, a writer of the first period, "against the usage and manner of all other nations be compelled for to leave their own language and for to construe their lessons and their things in French, and so they have since the Normans first came into England. Also gentlemen children be taught for to speak French from the time that they be rocked in their cradle, and know how to speak and play with a child's toy; and uplandish (or country) men will liken themselves to gentlemen, and strive with great busyness to speak French for to be more told of." "This manner," adds John of Trevisa, Higden's translator in Richard's time, "was much used before the first murrain (the Black Death of 1349), and is since somewhat changed.

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For John Cornwal, a master of grammar, changed the lore in grammar school and construing of French into English; and Richard Pencrych learned this manner of teaching of him, as other men did of Pencrych. So that now, the year of our Lord 1385 and of the second King Richard after the Conquest nine, in all the grammar schools of England children leaveth French, and construeth and learneth in English. Also gentlemen have now much left for to teach their children French."

This drift towards a general use of the national tongue told powerfully on literature. The influence of the French romances everywhere tended to make French the one literary language at the opening of the fourteenth century, and in England this influence had been backed by the French tone of the court of Henry the Third and the three Edwards. But at the close of the reign of Edward the Third the long French romances needed to be translated even for knightly hearers. "Let clerks indite in Latin," says the author of the "Testament of Love," "and let Frenchmen in their French also indite their quaint terms, for it is kindly to their mouths; and let us show our fantasies in such wordes as we learned of our mother's tongue." But the new national life afforded nobler materials than "fantasies" now for English literature. With the completion of the work of national unity had come the completion of the work of national freedom. The vigour of English life showed itself in the wide extension of commerce, in the progress of the towns, and the upgrowth of a free yeomanry. It gave even nobler signs of its activity in the spirit of national independence and moral earnestness which awoke at the call of Wyclif. New forces of thought and feeling which were destined to tell on every age of our later history broke their way through the crust of feudalism in the socialist revolt of the Lollards, and a sudden burst of military glory threw its glamour over the age of Crecy and Poitiers. It is this new gladness of a great people which

Chaucer.

CHAP. IV. utters itself in the verse of Geoffrey Chaucer. Chaucer was born about 1340, the son of a London vintner who lived in Thames Street; and it was in London that the bulk of his life was spent. His family, though not noble, seems to have been of some importance, for from the opening of his career we find Chaucer in close connexion with the Court. At sixteen he was made page to the wife of Lionel of Clarence; at nineteen he first bore arms in the campaign of 1359. But he was luckless enough to be made prisoner; and from the time of his release after the treaty of Breigny he took no further share in the military enterprises of his time. He seems again to have returned to service about the Court, and it was now that his first poems made their appearance, the "Compleynte to Pity" in 1368, and in 1369 the "Death of Blanch the Duchesse," the wife of John of Gaunt who from this time at least may be looked upon as his patron. It may have been to John's influence that he owed his employment in seven diplomatic missions which were probably connected with the financial straits of the Crown. Three of these, in 1372, 1374, and 1378, carried him to Italy. He visited Genoa and the brilliant court of the Visconti at Milan; at Florence, where the memory of Dante, the "great master" whom he commemorates so reverently in his verse, was still living, he may have met Boccaccio; at Padua, like his own clerk of Oxenford, he possibly caught the story of Griseldis from the lips of Petrarca.

His Early Poems.

It was these visits to Italy which gave us the Chaucer whom we know. From that hour his work stands out in vivid contrast with the poetic literature from the heart of which it sprang. The long French romances were the product of an age of wealth and ease, of indolent curiosity, of a fanciful and self-indulgent sentiment. Of the great passions which gave life to the Middle Ages, that of religious enthusiasm had degenerated into the conceits of Mariolatry, that of war into the extravagances of Chivalry. Love indeed remained; it was the

one theme of troubadour and trouvreur; but it was a love of refinement, of romantic follies, of scholastic discussions, of sensuous enjoyment—a plaything rather than a passion. Nature had to reflect the pleasant indolence of man; the song of the minstrel moved through a perpetual May-time; the grass was ever green; the music of the lark and the nightingale rang out from field and thicket. There was a gay avoidance of all that is serious, moral, or reflective in man's life: life was too amusing to be serious, too piquant, too sentimental, too full of interest and gaiety and chat. It was an age of talk: "mirth is none" says Chaucer's host "to ride on by the way dumb as a stone;" and the Trouveur aimed simply at being the most agreeable talker of his day. His romances, his rimes of Sir Tristram, his Romance of the Rose, are full of colour and fantasy, endless in detail, but with a sort of gorgeous idleness about their very length, the minuteness of their description of outer things, the vagueness of their touch when it passes to the subtler inner world.

It was with this literature that Chaucer had till now been familiar, and it was this which he followed in his earlier work. But from the time of his visits to Milan and Genoa his sympathies drew him not to the dying verse of France but to the new and mighty upgrowth of poetry in Italy. Dante's eagle looks at him from the sun. "Fraunces Petrark, the laureat poete," is to him one "whose rethorique sweete enluymned al Itail of poetrie." The "Troilus" which he produced about 1382 is an enlarged English version of Boccaccio's "Filostrato;" the Knight's Tale, whose first draft is of the same period, bears slight traces of his Teseide. It was indeed the "Decameron" which suggested the very form of the "Canterbury Tales," the earliest of which, such as those of the Doctor, the Man of Law, the Clerk, the Prioress, the Franklin, and the Squire, may probably be referred like the Parliament of Foules and the House of Fame to this time of Chaucer's life. But even while changing,

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CHAP. IV. as it were, the front of English poetry Chaucer preserves his own distinct personality. If he quizzes in the rime of Sir Thopaz the wearisome idleness of the French romance he retains all that was worth retaining of the French temper, its rapidity and agility of movement, its lightness and brilliancy of touch, its airy mockery, its gaiety and good humour, its critical coolness and self-control. The French wit quickens in him more than in any English writer the sturdy sense and shrewdness of our national disposition, corrects its extravagance, and relieves its somewhat ponderous morality. If on the other hand he echoes the joyous carelessness of the Italian tale, he tempers it with the English seriousness. As he follows Boccaccio all his changes are on the side of purity; and when the *Troilus* of the Florentine ends with the old sneer at the changeableness of woman Chaucer bids us "look Godward," and dwells on the unchangeableness of Heaven.

The Canterbury Tales.

The genius of Chaucer however was neither French nor Italian, whatever element it might borrow from either literature, but English to the core; and from the year 1384 all trace of foreign influence dies away. Chaucer had now reached the climax of his poetic power. He was a busy, practical worker, Comptroller of the Customs in 1374, of the Petty Customs in 1382, a member of the Commons in the Parliament of 1386. The fall of the Duke of Lancaster from power may have deprived him of employment for a time, but from 1389 to 1391 he was Clerk of the Royal Works, busy with repairs and building at Westminster, Windsor, and the Tower. His air indeed was that of a student rather than of a man of the world. A single portrait has preserved for us his forked beard, his dark-coloured dress, the knife and pen-case at his girdle, and we may supplement this portrait by a few vivid touches of his own. The sly, elvish face, the quick walk, the plump figure and portly waist were those of a genial and humorous man; but men jested at his silence, his

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abstraction, his love of study. "Thou lookest as thou wouldest find an hare," laughs the host, "and ever on the ground I see thee stare." He heard little of his neighbours' talk when office work in Thames Street was over. "Thou goest home to thy own house anon, and also dumb as a stone thou sittest at another book till fully dazed is thy look, and livest thus as an heremite, although," he adds slyly, "thy abstinence is lite," or little. But of this seeming abstraction from the world about him there is not a trace in Chaucer's verse. We see there how keen his observation was, how vivid and intense his sympathy with nature and the men among whom he moved. "Farewell, my book," he cried as spring came after winter and the lark's song roused him at dawn to spend hours gazing alone on the daisy whose beauty he sang. But field and stream and flower and bird, much as he loved them, were less to him than man. No poetry was ever more human than Chaucer's, none ever came more frankly and genially home to men than his "*Canterbury Tales*."

It was the continuation and revision of this work which mainly occupied him during the years from 1384 to 1390. Its best stories, those of the Miller, the Reeve, the Cook, the Wife of Bath, the Merchant, the Friar, the Nun, the Priest, and the Pardoner, are ascribed to this period, as well as the Prologue. The framework which Chaucer chose—that of a pilgrimage from London to Canterbury—not only enabled him to string these tales together, but lent itself admirably to the peculiar characteristics of his poetic temper, his dramatic versatility and the universality of his sympathy. His tales cover the whole field of mediæval poetry; the legend of the priest, the knightly romance, the wonder-tale of the traveller, the broad humour of the fabliau, allegory and apologue, all are there. He finds a yet wider scope for his genius in the persons who tell these stories, the thirty pilgrims who start in the May morning from the Tabard in Southwark—thirty distinct figures, representatives of every class of

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CHAP. IV. English society from the noble to the ploughman. We see the "verray perfight gentil knight" in cassock and coat of mail, with his curly-headed squire beside him, fresh as the May morning, and behind them the brown-faced yeoman in his coat and hood of green with a mighty bow in his hand. A group of ecclesiastics light up for us the mediæval church—the brawny hunt-loving monk, whose bridle jingles as loud and clear as the chapel-bell—the wanton friar, first among the beggars and harpers of the country side—the poor parson, threadbare, learned, and devout ("Christ's lore and his apostles twelve he taught, and first he followed it himself")—the summoner with his fiery face—the pardoner with his wallet "bretfull of pardons, come from Rome all hot"—the lively prioress with her courtly French lisp, her soft little red mouth, and "Amor vincit omnia" graven on her brooch. Learning is there in the portly person of the doctor of physic, rich with the profits of the pestilence—the busy serjeant-of-law, "that ever seemed busier than he was"—the hollow-cheeked clerk of Oxford with his love of books and short sharp sentences that disguise a latent tenderness which breaks out at last in the story of Griseldis. Around them crowd types of English industry; the merchant; the franklin in whose house "it snowed of meat and drink;" the sailor fresh from frays in the Channel; the buxom wife of Bath; the broad-shouldered miller; the haberdasher, carpenter, weaver, dyer, tapestry-maker, each in the livery of his craft; and last the honest ploughman who would dyke and delve for the poor without hire. It is the first time in English poetry that we are brought face to face not with characters or allegories or reminiscences of the past, but with living and breathing men, men distinct in temper and sentiment as in face or costume or mode of speech; and with this distinctness of each maintained throughout the story by a thousand shades of expression and action. It is the first time, too, that we meet with the dramatic power which not only creates each

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character but combines it with its fellows, which not only adjusts each tale or jest to the temper of the person who utters it but fuses all into a poetic unity. It is life in its largeness, its variety, its complexity, which surrounds us in the "Canterbury Tales." In some of the stories indeed, which were composed no doubt at an earlier time, there is the tedium of the old romance or the pedantry of the schoolman; but taken as a whole the poem is the work not of a man of letters but of a man of action. Chaucer has received his training from war, courts, business, travel—a training not of books but of life. And it is life that he loves—the delicacy of its sentiment, the breadth of its farce, its laughter and its tears, the tenderness of its Griseldis or the Smollett-like adventures of the miller and the clerks. It is this largeness of heart, this wide tolerance, which enables him to reflect man for us as none but Shakspeare has ever reflected him, and to do this with a pathos, a shrewd sense and kindly humour, a freshness and joyousness of feeling, that even Shakspeare has not surpassed.

The last ten years of Chaucer's life saw a few more tales added to the Pilgrimage and a few poems to his work; but his power was lessening, and in 1400 he rested from his labours in his last home, a house in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel at Westminster. His body rests within the Abbey church. It was strange that such a voice should have awakened no echo in the singers that follow, but the first burst of English song died as suddenly in Chaucer as the hope and glory of his age. He died indeed at the moment of a revolution which was the prelude to years of national discord and national suffering. Whatever may have been the grounds of his action, the rule of Richard the Second after his assumption of power had shown his capacity for self-restraint. Parted by his own will from the counsellors of his youth, calling to his service the Lords Appellant, reconciled alike with the baronage and the Parliament, the young King promised to be among the noblest and wisest

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rulers that England had seen. But the violent and haughty temper which underlay this self-command showed itself from time to time. The Earl of Arundel and his brother the bishop stood in the front rank of the party which had coerced Richard in his early days; their influence was great in the new government. But a strife between the Earl and John of Gaunt revived the King's resentment at the past action of this house; and at the funeral of Anne of Bohemia in 1394 a fancied slight roused Richard to a burst of passion. He struck the Earl so violently that the blow drew blood. But the quarrel was patched up, and the reconciliation was followed by the elevation of Bishop Arundel to the vacant Primacy in 1396. In the preceding year Richard had crossed to Ireland and in a short autumn campaign reduced its native chiefs again to submission. Fears of Lollard disturbances soon recalled him, but these died at the King's presence, and Richard was able to devote himself to the negotiation of a marriage which was to be the turning point of his reign. His policy throughout the recent years had been a policy of peace. It was war which rendered the Crown helpless before the Parliament, and peace was needful if the work of constant progress was not to be undone. But the short truces, renewed from time to time, which he had as yet secured were insufficient for this purpose, for so long as war might break out in the coming year the King's hands were tied. The impossibility of renouncing the claim to the French crown indeed made a formal peace impossible, but its ends might be secured by a lengthened truce, and it was with a view to this that Richard in 1396 wedded Isabella, the daughter of Charles the Sixth of France. The bride was a mere child, but she brought with her a renewal of the truce for eight and-twenty-years.

*Change of
Richard's
temper.*

The match was hardly concluded when the veil under which Richard had shrouded his real temper began to be dropped. His craving for absolute power, such as he witnessed in the Court of France, was probably intensified

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from this moment by a mental disturbance which gathered strength as the months went on. As if to preclude any revival of the war Richard had surrendered Cherbourg to the King of Navarre and now gave back Brest to the Duke of Brittany. He was said to have pledged himself at his wedding to restore Calais to the King of France. But once freed from all danger of such a struggle the whole character of his rule seemed to change. His court became as crowded and profuse as his grandfather's. Money was recklessly borrowed and as recklessly squandered. The King's pride became insane, and it was fed with dreams of winning the Imperial crown through the deposition of Wenzel of Bohemia. The councillors with whom he had acted since his resumption of authority saw themselves powerless. John of Gaunt indeed still retained influence over the King. It was the support of the Duke of Lancaster after his return from his Spanish campaign which had enabled Richard to hold in check the Duke of Gloucester and the party that he led; and the anxiety of the young King to retain this support was seen in his grant of Aquitaine to his uncle, and in the legitimation of the Beauforts, John's children by a mistress, Catherine Swinford, whom he married after the death of his second wife. The friendship of the Duke brought with it the adhesion of one even more important, his son Henry, the Earl of Derby. As heir through his mother, Blanche of Lancaster, to the estates and influence of the Lancastrian house, Henry was the natural head of a constitutional opposition, and his weight was increased by a marriage with the heiress of the house of Bohun. He had taken a prominent part in the overthrow of Suffolk and De Vere, and on the King's resumption of power he had prudently withdrawn from the realm on a vow of Crusade, had touched at Barbary, visited the Holy Sepulchre, and in 1390 sailed for Dantzic and taken part in a campaign against the heathen Prussians with the Teutonic Knights. Since his return he had silently followed in his father's

CHAP. IV. track. But the counsels of John of Gaunt were hardly
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A new uneasiness was seen in the Parliament of 1397, and the Commons prayed for a redress of the profusion of the Court. Richard at once seized on the opportunity for a struggle. He declared himself grieved that his subjects should "take on themselves any ordinance or governance of the person of the King or his hostel or of any persons of estate whom he might be pleased to have in his company." The Commons were at once overawed; they owned that the cognizance of such matters belonged wholly to the King, and gave up to the Duke of Lancaster the name of the member, Sir Thomas Haxey, who had brought forward this article of their prayer. The lords pronounced him a traitor, and his life was only saved by the fact that he was a clergyman and by the interposition of Archbishop Arundel. The Earl of Arundel and the Duke of Gloucester at once withdrew from Court. They stood almost alone, for of the royal house the Dukes of Lancaster and York with their sons the Earls of Derby and Rutland were now with the King, and the old coadjutor of Gloucester, the Earl of Nottingham, was in high favour with him. The Earl of Warwick alone joined them, and he was included in a charge of conspiracy which was followed by the arrest of the three. A fresh Parliament in September was packed with royal partizans, and Richard moved boldly to his end. The pardons of the Lords Appellant were revoked. Archbishop Arundel was impeached and banished from the realm, he was transferred by the Pope to the See of St. Andrew's, and the Primacy given to Roger Walden. The Earl of Arundel, accused before the Peers under John of Gaunt as High Steward, was condemned and executed in a single day. Warwick, who owned the truth of the charge, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The

Duke of Gloucester was saved from a trial by a sudden death in his prison at Calais. A new Parliament at Shrewsbury in the opening of 1398 completed the King's work. In three days it declared null the proceedings of the Parliament of 1388, granted to the King a subsidy on wool and leather for his life, and delegated its authority to a standing committee of eighteen members from both Houses with power to continue their sittings even after the dissolution of the Parliament and to "examine and determine all matters and subjects which had been moved in the presence of the King with all the dependencies thereof."

In a single year the whole colour of Richard's government had changed. He had revenged himself on the men who had once held him down, and his revenge was hardly taken before he disclosed a plan of absolute government. He had used the Parliament to strike down the Primate as well as the greatest nobles of the realm and to give him a revenue for life which enabled him to get rid of Parliament itself, for the Permanent Committee which it named were men devoted, as Richard held, to his cause. John of Gaunt was at its head, and the rest of its lords were those who had backed the King in his blow at Gloucester and the Arundels. Two however were excluded. In the general distribution of rewards which followed Gloucester's overthrow the Earl of Derby had been made Duke of Hereford, the Earl of Nottingham Duke of Norfolk. But at the close of 1397 the two Dukes charged each other with treasonable talk as they rode between Brentford and London, and the Permanent Committee ordered the matter to be settled by a single combat. In September 1398 the Dukes entered the lists; but Richard forbade the duel, sentenced the Duke of Norfolk to banishment for life, and Henry of Lancaster to exile for six years. As Henry left London the streets were crowded with people weeping for his fate; some followed him even to the coast. But his withdrawal removed the last check on Richard's despotism. He forced from

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CHAP. IV. every tenant of the Crown an oath to recognize the acts of his Committee as valid, and to oppose any attempts to alter or revoke them. Forced loans, the sale of charters of pardon to Gloucester's adherents, the outlawry of seven counties at once on the plea that they had supported his enemies and must purchase pardon, a reckless interference with the course of justice, roused into new life the old discontent. Even this might have been defied had not Richard set an able and unscrupulous leader at its head. Leave had been given to Henry of Lancaster to receive his father's inheritance on the death of John of Gaunt, in February 1399. But an ordinance of the Continual Committee annulled this permission and Richard seized the Lancastrian estates. Archbishop Arundel at once saw the chance of dealing blow for blow. He hastened to Paris and pressed the Duke to return to England, telling him how all men there looked for it, "especially the Londoners, who loved him a hundred times more than they did the King." For a while Henry remained buried in thought, "leaning on a window overlooking a garden;" but Arundel's pressure at last prevailed, he made his way secretly to Brittany, and with fifteen knights set sail from Vannes.

*Ireland
and the
Pale.*

What had really decided him was the opportunity offered by Richard's absence from the realm. From the opening of his reign the King's attention had been constantly drawn to his dependent lordship of Ireland. More than two hundred years had passed away since the troubles which followed the murder of Archbishop Thomas forced Henry the Second to leave his work of conquest unfinished, and the opportunity for a complete reduction of the island which had been lost then had never returned. When Henry quitted Ireland indeed Leinster was wholly in English hands, Connaught bowed to a nominal acknowledgement of the English overlordship, and for a while the work of conquest seemed to go steadily on. John de Courcy penetrated into

Ulster and established himself at Down-Patrick; and Henry planned the establishment of his youngest son, John, as Lord of Ireland. But the levity of the young prince, who mocked the rude dresses of the native chieftains and plucked them in insult by the beard, soon forced his father to recall him; and in the continental struggle which soon opened on the Angevin kings as in the constitutional struggle within England itself which followed it all serious purpose of completing the conquest of Ireland was forgotten. Nothing indeed but the feuds and weakness of the Irish tribes enabled the adventurers to hold the districts of Drogheda, Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, and Cork, which formed what was thenceforth known as "the English Pale." In all the history of Ireland no event has proved more disastrous than this half-finished conquest. Had the Irish driven their invaders into the sea, or the English succeeded in the complete reduction of the island, the misery of its after ages might have been avoided. A struggle such as that in which Scotland drove out its conquerors might have produced a spirit of patriotism and national union which would have formed a people out of the mass of warring clans. A conquest such as that in which the Normans made England their own would have spread at any rate the law, the order, the civilization of the conquering country over the length and breadth of the conquered. Unhappily Ireland, while powerless to effect its entire deliverance, was strong enough to hold its assailants partially at bay. The country was broken into two halves whose conflict has never ceased. So far from either giving elements of civilization or good government to the other, conqueror and conquered reaped only degradation from the ceaseless conflict. The native tribes lost whatever tendency to union or social progress had survived the invasion of the Danes. Their barbarism was intensified by their hatred of the more civilized intruders. But these intruders themselves, penned within the narrow

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CHAP. IV. limits of the Pale, brutalized by a merciless conflict, cut off from contact with the refining influences of a larger world, sank rapidly to the level of the barbarism about them: and the lawlessness, the ferocity, the narrowness of feudalism broke out unchecked in this horde of adventurers who held the land by their sword.

English and Irish. From the first the story of the English Pale was a story of degradation and anarchy. It needed the stern vengeance of John, whose army stormed its strongholds and drove its leading barons into exile, to preserve even their fealty to the English Crown. John divided the Pale into counties and ordered the observance of the English law; but the departure of his army was the signal for a return of the disorder he had trampled under foot. Between Englishmen and Irishmen went on a ceaseless and pitiless war. Every Irishman without the Pale was counted by the English settlers an enemy and a robber whose murder found no cognizance or punishment at the hands of the law. Half the subsistence of the English barons was drawn from forays across the border, and these forays were avenged by incursions of native marauders which carried havoc at times to the very walls of Dublin. Within the Pale itself the misery was hardly less. The English settlers were harried and oppressed by their own baronage as much as by the Irish marauders, while the feuds of the English lords wasted their strength and prevented any effective combination either for common conquest or common defence. So utter seemed their weakness that Robert Bruce saw in it an opportunity for a counter-blow at his English assailants, and his victory at Bannockburn was followed up by the despatch of a Scotch force to Ireland with his brother Edward at its head. A general rising of the Irish welcomed this deliverer; but the danger drove the barons of the Pale to a momentary union, and in 1316 their valour was proved on the bloody field of Athenree by the slaughter of eleven thousand of their foes and the almost complete annihilation of the sept of the

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O'Connors. But with victory returned the old anarchy and degradation. The barons of the Pale sank more and more into Irish chieftains. The Fitz-Maurices, who became Earls of Desmond and whose vast territory in Munster was erected into a County Palatine, adopted the dress and manners of the natives around them. The rapid growth of this evil was seen in the ruthless provisions by which Edward the Third strove to check it in his Statute of Kilkenny. The Statute forbade the adoption of the Irish language or name or dress by any man of English blood: it enforced within the Pale the exclusive use of English law, and made the use of the native or Brehon law, which was gaining ground, an act of treason; it made treasonable any marriage of the Englishry with persons of Irish race, or any adoption of English children by Irish foster-fathers.

But stern as they were these provisions proved fruitless to check the fusion of the two races, while the growing independence of the Lords of the Pale threw off all but the semblance of obedience to the English government. It was this which stirred Richard to a serious effort for the conquest and organization of the island. In 1386 he granted the "entire dominion" of Ireland with the title of its Duke to Robert de Vere on condition of his carrying out its utter reduction. But the troubles of the reign soon recalled De Vere, and it was not till the truce with France had freed his hands that the King again took up his projects of conquest. In 1394 he landed with an army at Waterford, and received the general submission of the native chieftains. But the Lords of the Pale held sullenly aloof; and Richard had no sooner quitted the island than the Irish in turn refused to carry out their promise of quitting Leinster, and engaged in a fresh contest with the Earl of March, whom the King had proclaimed as his heir and left behind him as his lieutenant in Ireland. In the summer of 1398 March was beaten and slain in battle: and Richard resolved to

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avenge his cousin's death and complete the work he had begun by a fresh invasion. He felt no apprehension of danger. At home his triumph seemed complete. The death of Norfolk, the exile of Henry of Lancaster, left the baronage without heads for any rising. He ensured, as he believed, the loyalty of the great houses by the hostages of their blood whom he carried with him, at whose head was Henry of Lancaster's son, the future Henry the Fifth. The refusal of the Percies, the Earl of Northumberland and his son Henry Percy or Hotspur, to obey his summons might have warned him that danger was brewing in the north. Richard however took little heed. He banished the Percies, who withdrew into Scotland; and sailed for Ireland at the end of May, leaving his uncle the Duke of York regent in his stead.

Landing of Henry.

The opening of his campaign was indecisive, and it was not till fresh reinforcements arrived at Dublin that the King could prepare for a march into the heart of the island. But while he planned the conquest of Ireland the news came that England was lost. Little more than a month had passed after his departure when Henry of Lancaster entered the Humber and landed at Ravenspur. He came, he said, to claim his heritage; and three of his Yorkshire castles at once threw open their gates. The two great houses of the north joined him at once. Ralph Neville, the Earl of Westmoreland, had married his half-sister; the Percies came from their exile over the Scottish border. As he pushed quickly to the south all resistance broke down. The army which the Regent gathered refused to do hurt to the Duke; London called him to her gates; and the royal Council could only march hastily on Bristol in the hope of securing that port for the King's return. But the town at once yielded to Henry's summons, the Regent submitted to him, and with an army which grew at every step the Duke marched upon Cheshire, where Richard's adherents were gathering in arms to meet the King. Contrary winds had for a while kept Richard ignorant

of his cousin's progress, and even when the news reached him he was in a web of treachery. The Duke of Albemarle, the son of the Regent Duke of York, was beside him, and at his persuasion the King abandoned his first purpose of returning at once, and sent the Earl of Salisbury to Conway while he himself waited to gather his army and fleet. The six days he proposed to gather them in became sixteen, and the delay proved fatal to his cause. As no news came of Richard the Welshmen who flocked to Salisbury's camp dispersed on Henry's advance to Chester. Henry was in fact master of the realm at the opening of August when Richard at last sailed from Waterford and landed at Milford Haven.

Every road was blocked, and the news that all was lost told on the thirty thousand men he brought with him. In a single day but six thousand remained, and even these dispersed when it was found that the King had ridden off disguised as a friar to join the force which he believed to be awaiting him in North Wales with Salisbury at its head. He reached Caernarvon only to find this force already disbanded, and throwing himself into the castle despatched his kinsmen, the Dukes of Exeter and Surrey, to Chester to negotiate with Henry of Lancaster. But they were detained there while the Earl of Northumberland pushed forward with a picked body of men, and securing the castles of the coast at last sought an interview with Richard at Conway. The King's confidence was still unbroken. He threatened to raise a force of Welshmen and to put Lancaster to death. Deserted as he was indeed, a King was in himself a power, and only the treacherous pledges of the Earl induced him to set aside his plans for a reconciliation to be brought about in Parliament and to move from Conway on the promise of a conference with Henry at Flint. But he had no sooner reached the town than he found himself surrounded by Lancaster's forces. "I am betrayed," he cried, as the view of his enemies burst on him from the hill;

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Richard the Second.
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Richard's capture.

CHAP. IV. "there are pennons and banners in the valley." But it was too late for retreat. Richard was seized and brought before his cousin. "I am come before my time," said Lancaster, "but I will show you the reason. Your people, my lord, complain that for the space of twenty years you have ruled them harshly: however, if it please God, I will help you to rule them better." "Fair cousin," replied the King, "since it pleases you, it pleases me well." Then, breaking in private into passionate regrets that he had ever spared his cousin's life, he suffered himself to be carried a prisoner along the road to London.

Richard
the
Second.
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CHAPTER V.

THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

1399—1422

ONCE safe in the Tower, it was easy to wrest from Richard a resignation of his crown; and this resignation was solemnly accepted by the Parliament which met at the close of September 1399. But the resignation was confirmed by a solemn Act of Deposition. The coronation oath was read, and a long impeachment which stated the breach of the promises made in it was followed by a solemn vote of both Houses which removed Richard from the state and authority of King. According to the strict rules of hereditary descent as construed by the feudal lawyers by an assumed analogy with the rules which governed descent of ordinary estates the crown would now have passed to a house which had at an earlier period played a leading part in the revolutions of the Edwards. The great-grandson of the Mortimer who brought about the deposition of Edward the Second had married the daughter and heiress of Lionel of Clarence, the third son of Edward the Third. The childlessness of Richard and the death of Edward's second son without issue placed Edmund Mortimer, the son of the Earl who had fallen in Ireland, first among the claimants of the crown; but he was now a child of six years old, the strict rule of hereditary descent had never received any formal recognition in the case of the Crown, and precedent suggested a right of Parliament to choose in such a case a successor among any other members of

Henry the
Fourth.

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the Royal House. Only one such successor was in fact possible. Rising from his seat and crossing himself, Henry of Lancaster solemnly challenged the crown, "as that I am descended by right line of blood coming from the good lord King Henry the Third, and through that right that God of his grace hath sent me with help of my kin and of my friends to recover it: the which realm was in point to be undone by default of governance and undoing of good laws." Whatever defects such a claim might present were more than covered by the solemn recognition of Parliament. The two Archbishops, taking the new sovereign by the hand, seated him upon the throne, and Henry in emphatic words ratified the compact between himself and his people. "Sirs," he said to the prelates, lords, knights, and burgesses gathered round him, "I thank God and you, spiritual and temporal, and all estates of the land; and do you to wit it is not my will that any man think that by way of conquest I would disinherit any of his heritage, franchises, or other rights that he ought to have, nor put him out of the good that he has and has had by the good laws and customs of the realm, except those persons that have been against the good purpose and the common profit of the realm."

Statute of
Heresy.

The deposition of a king, the setting aside of one claimant and the elevation of another to the throne, marked the triumph of the English Parliament over the monarchy. The struggle of the Edwards against its gradual advance had culminated in the bold effort of Richard the Second to supersede it by a commission dependent on the Crown. But the House of Lancaster was precluded by its very position from any renewal of the struggle. It was not merely that the exhaustion of the treasury by the war and revolt which followed Henry's accession left him even more than the kings who had gone before in the hands of the Estates; it was that his very right to the Crown lay in an acknow-

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ledgement of their highest pretensions. He had been raised to the throne by a Parliamentary revolution. His claim to obedience had throughout to rest on a Parliamentary title. During no period of our early history therefore were the powers of the two Houses so frankly recognized. The tone of Henry the Fourth till the very close of his reign is that of humble compliance in all but ecclesiastical matters with the prayers of the Parliament, and even his imperious successor shrank almost with timidity from any conflict with it. But the Crown had been bought by pledges less noble than this. Arundel was not only the representative of constitutional rule; he was also the representative of religious persecution. No prelate had been so bitter a foe of the Lollards, and the support which the Church had given to the recent revolution had no doubt sprung from its belief that a sovereign whom Arundel placed on the throne would deal pitilessly with the growing heresy. The expectations of the clergy were soon realized. In the first Convocation of his reign Henry declared himself the protector of the Church and ordered the prelates to take measures for the suppression of heresy and of the wandering preachers. His declaration was but a prelude to the Statute of Heresy which was passed at the opening of 1401. By the provisions of this infamous Act the hindrances which had till now neutralized the efforts of the bishops to enforce the common law were utterly taken away. Not only were they permitted to arrest all preachers of heresy, all schoolmasters infected with heretical teaching, all owners and writers of heretical books, and to imprison them even if they recanted at the King's pleasure, but a refusal to abjure or a relapse after abjuration enabled them to hand over the heretic to the civil officers, and by these—so ran the first legal enactment of religious bloodshed which defiled our Statute-book—he was to be burned on a high place before the people. The statute was hardly passed when William Sautre became its first victim.

CHAP. V. Sautre, while a parish priest at Lynn, had been cited before the Bishop of Norwich two years before for heresy and forced to recant. But he still continued to preach against the worship of images, against pilgrimages, and against transubstantiation till the Statute of Heresy strengthened Arundel's hands. In February, 1401, Sautre was brought before the Primate as a relapsed heretic, and on refusing to recant a second time was degraded from his orders. He was handed to the secular power, and on the issue of a royal writ publicly burned.

*England
and
France.*

The support of the nobles had been partly won by a hope hardly less fatal to the peace of the realm, the hope of a renewal of the strife with France. The peace of Richard's later years had sprung not merely from the policy of the English King, but from the madness of Charles the Sixth of France. France fell into the hands of its king's uncle, the Duke of Burgundy, and as the Duke was ruler of Flanders and peace with England was a necessity for Flemish industry, his policy went hand in hand with that of Richard. His rival, the King's brother, Lewis, Duke of Orleans, was the head of the French war-party; and it was with the view of bringing about war that he supported Henry of Lancaster in his exile at the French court. Burgundy on the other hand listened to Richard's denunciation of Henry as a traitor, and strove to prevent his departure. But his efforts were in vain, and he had to witness a revolution which hurled Richard from the throne, deprived Isabella of her crown, and restored to power the baronial party of which Gloucester, the advocate of war, had long been the head. The dread of war was increased by a pledge which Henry was said to have given at his coronation that he would not only head an army in its march into France but that he would march further into France than ever his grandfather had done. The French Court retorted by refusing to acknowledge Henry as King, while the truce concluded with Richard came at his death legally to an end. In spite of this defiance however

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Burgundy remained true to the interests of Flanders, and Henry clung to a truce which gave him time to establish his throne. But the influence of the baronial party in England made peace hard to keep; the Duke of Orleans urged on France to war; and the hatred of the two peoples broke through the policy of the two governments. Count Waleran of St. Pol, who had married Richard's half-sister, put out to sea with a fleet which swept the east coast and entered the Channel. Pirates from Brittany and Navarre soon swarmed in the narrow seas, and their ravages were paid back by those of pirates from the Cinque Ports. A more formidable trouble broke out in the north. The enmity of France roused as of old the enmity of Scotland; the Scotch King Robert the Third refused to acknowledge Henry, and Scotch freebooters cruized along the northern coast.

Attack from without woke attack from within the realm. Henry had shown little taste for bloodshed in his conduct of the revolution. Save those of the royal councillors whom he found at Bristol no one had been put to death. Though a deputation of lords with Archbishop Arundel at its head pressed him to take Richard's life, he steadily refused, and kept him a prisoner at Pomfret. The judgements against Gloucester, Warwick, and Arundel were reversed, but the lords who had appealed the Duke were only punished by the loss of the dignities which they had received as their reward. Richard's brother and nephew by the half-blood, the Dukes of Surrey and Exeter, became again Earls of Kent and Huntingdon. York's son, the Duke of Albemarle, sank once more into Earl of Rutland. Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, lost his new Marquisate of Dorset; Spenser lost his Earldom of Gloucester. But in spite of a stormy scene among the lords in Parliament Henry refused to exact further punishment; and his real temper was seen in a statute which forbade all such appeals and left treason to be dealt with by ordinary process of law. But the times were too rough

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for mercy such as this. Clouds no sooner gathered round the new King than the degraded lords leagued with the Earl of Salisbury and the deposed Bishop of Carlisle to release Richard and to murder Henry. Betrayed by Rutland in the spring of 1401, and threatened by the King's march from London, they fled to Cirencester; but the town was against them, its burghers killed Kent and Salisbury, and drove out the rest. A terrible retribution followed. Lord Spenser and the Earl of Huntingdon were taken and summarily beheaded; thirty more conspirators fell into the King's hands to meet the same fate. They drew with them in their doom the wretched prisoner in whose name they had risen. A great council held after the suppression of the revolt prayed "that if Richard, the late King, be alive, as some suppose he is, it be ordained that he be well and securely guarded for the safety of the states of the King and kingdom; but if he be dead, then that he be openly showed to the people that they may have knowledge thereof." The ominous words were soon followed by news of Richard's death in prison. His body was brought to St. Paul's, Henry himself with the princes of the blood royal bearing the pall: and the face was left uncovered to meet rumours that the prisoner had been assassinated by his keeper, Sir Piers Exton.

*Revolt of
Wales.*

In June Henry marched northward to end the trouble from the Scots. With their usual policy the Scottish army under the Duke of Albany withdrew as the English crossed the border, and looked coolly on while Henry invested the castle of Edinburgh. The wants of his army forced him in fact to raise the siege; but even success would have been fruitless, for he was recalled by trouble nearer home. Wales was in full revolt. The country had been devoted to Richard; and so notorious was its disaffection to the new line that when Henry's son knelt at his father's feet to receive a grant of the Principality a shrewd bystander murmured, "he must conquer it if he will have it." The death of the fallen King only added to the Welsh disquiet,

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for in spite of the public exhibition of his body he was believed to be still alive. Some held that he had escaped to Scotland, and an impostor who took his name was long maintained at the Scottish Court. In Wales it was believed that he was still a prisoner in Chester Castle. But the trouble would have died away had it not been raised into revolt by the energy of Owen Glyndwr or Glendower. Owen was a descendant of one of the last native Princes, Llewelyn-ap-Jorwerth, and the lord of considerable estates in Merioneth. He had been squire of the body to Richard the Second, and had clung to him till he was seized at Flint. It was probably his known aversion from the revolution which had deposed his master that brought on him the hostility of Lord Grey of Ruthin, the stay of the Lancastrian cause in North Wales; and the same political ground may have existed for the refusal of the Parliament to listen to his prayer for redress and for the restoration of the lands which Grey had seized. But the refusal was embittered by words of insult; when the Bishop of St. Asaph warned them of Owen's power the lords retorted that "they cared not for barefoot knaves." They were soon to be made to care. At the close of 1400 Owen rose in revolt, burned the town of Ruthin, and took the title of Prince of Wales.

His action at once changed the disaffection into a national revolt. His raids on the Marches and his capture of Radnor marked its importance, and Henry marched against him in the summer of 1401. But Glyndwr's post at Corwen defied attack, and the pressure in the north forced the King to march away into Scotland. Henry Percy, who held the castles of North Wales as Constable, was left to suppress the rebellion, but Owen met Percy's arrival by the capture of Conway and the King was forced to hurry fresh forces under his son Henry to the west. The boy was too young as yet to show the military and political ability which was to find its first field in these Welsh campaigns, and his presence did little to stay the

*Owen
Glyndwr.*

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growth of revolt. While Owen's lands were being harried Owen was stirring the people of Caermarthen into rebellion and pressing the siege of Abergavenny; nor could the presence of English troops save Shropshire from pillage. Everywhere the Welshmen rose for their "Prince;" the Bards declared his victories to have been foretold by Merlin; even the Welsh scholars at Oxford left the University in a body and joined his standard. The castles of Ruthin, Hawarden, and Flint fell into his hands, and with his capture of Conway gave him command of North Wales. The arrival of help from Scotland and the hope of help from France gave fresh vigour to Owen's action, and though Percy held his ground stubbornly on the coast and even recovered Conway he at last threw up his command in disgust. A fresh inroad of Henry on his return from Scotland again failed to bring Owen to battle, and the negotiations which he carried on during the following winter were a mere blind to cover preparations for a new attack. So strong had Glyndwr become in 1402 that in June he was able to face an English army in the open field at Brynglas and to defeat it with a loss of a thousand men. The King again marched to the border to revenge this blow. But the storms which met him as he entered the hills, storms which his archers ascribed to the magic powers of Owen, ruined his army, and he was forced to withdraw as of old. A raid over the northern border distracted the English forces. A Scottish army entered England with the impostor who bore Richard's name, and though it was utterly defeated by Henry Percy in September at Homildon Hill the respite had served Owen well. He sallied out from the inaccessible fastnesses in which he had held Henry at bay to win victories which were followed by the adhesion of all North Wales and of great part of South Wales to his cause.

The Percies. What gave life to these attacks and conspiracies was the hostility of France. The influence of the Duke of

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Burgundy was still strong enough to prevent any formal hostilities, but the war party was gaining more and more the ascendant. Its head, the Duke of Orleans, had fanned the growing flame by sending a formal defiance to Henry the Fourth as the murderer of Richard. French knights were among the prisoners whom the Percies took at Homildon Hill; and it may have been through their intervention that the Percies themselves were now brought into correspondence with the court of France. No house had played a greater part in the overthrow of Richard, or had been more richly rewarded by the new King. But old grudges existed between the house of Percy and the house of Lancaster. The Earl of Northumberland had been at bitter variance with John of Gaunt; and though a common dread of Richard's enmity had thrown the Percies and Henry together the new King and his powerful subjects were soon parted again. Henry had ground indeed for distrust. The death of Richard left the young Mortimer, Earl of March, next claimant in blood of the crown, and the King had shown his sense of this danger by imprisoning the earl and his sisters in the Tower. But this imprisonment made their uncle, Sir Edmund Mortimer, the representative of their house; and Edmund withdrew to the Welsh Marches, refusing to own Henry for king. The danger was averted by the luck which threw Sir Edmund as a captive into the hands of Owen Glyndwr in the battle of Brynglas. It was natural that Henry should refuse to allow Mortimer's kinsmen to ransom so formidable an enemy; but among these kinsmen Henry Percy ranked himself through his marriage with Sir Edmund's sister, and the refusal served as a pretext for a final breach with the King.

Percy had withdrawn from the Welsh war in wrath at the inadequate support which Henry gave him; and his anger had been increased by a delay in repayment of the sums spent by his house in the contest with Scotland, as well as by the King's demand that he should surrender the Earl

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of the
Percies.*

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of Douglas whom he had taken prisoner at Homildon Hill. He now became the centre of a great conspiracy to place the Earl of March upon the throne. His father, the Earl of Northumberland, his uncle, Thomas Percy, the Earl of Worcester, joined in the plot. Sir Edmund Mortimer negotiated for aid from Owen Glyndwr; the Earl of Douglas threw in his fortunes with the confederates; and Henry Percy himself crossed to France and obtained promises of support. The war party had now gained the upper hand at the French court; in 1403 preparations were made to attack Calais, and a Breton fleet put to sea. At the news of its presence in the Channel Henry Percy and the Earl of Worcester at once rose in the north and struck across England to join Owen Glyndwr in Wales, while the Earl of Northumberland gathered a second army and advanced more slowly to their support. But Glyndwr was still busy with the siege of Caermarthen, and the King by a hasty march flung himself across the road of the Percies as they reached Shrewsbury. On the twenty-third of July a fierce fight ended in the defeat of the rebel force. Henry Percy was slain in battle, the Earl of Worcester taken and beheaded; while Northumberland, who had been delayed by an army under his rival in the north, Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, was thrown into prison, and only pardoned on his protestations of innocence. The quick, hard blow did its work. The young Earl of March betrayed the plans of his partizans to purchase pardon. The Breton fleet, which had defeated an English fleet in the Channel and made a descent upon Plymouth, withdrew to its harbours; and though the Duke of Burgundy was on the point of commencing the siege of Calais the plans of an attack on that town were no more heard of.

Henry's
diffi-
culties.

But the difficulty of Wales remained as great as ever. The discouragement of Owen at the failure of the conspiracy of the Percies was removed by the open aid of the French Court. In July 1404 the French King in a

formal treaty owned Glyndwr as Prince of Wales, and his promises of aid gave fresh heart to the insurgents. What hampered Henry's efforts most in meeting this danger was the want of money. At the opening of 1404 the Parliament grudgingly gave a subsidy of a twentieth, but the treasury called for fresh supplies in October, and the wearied Commons fell back on their old proposal of a confiscation of Church property. Under the influence of Archbishop Arundel the Lords succeeded in quashing the project, and a new subsidy was voted; but the treasury was soon as empty as before. Treason was still rife; the Duke of York, who had played so conspicuous a part in Richard's day as Earl of Rutland, was sent for a while to the Tower on suspicion of complicity in an attempt of his sister to release the Earl of March; and Glyndwr remained unconquerable.

But fortune was now beginning to turn. The danger from Scotland was suddenly removed. King Robert resolved to send his son James for training to the court of France, but the boy was driven to the English coast by a storm and Henry refused to release him. Had the Scots been friends, the King jested, they would have sent James to him for education, as he knew the French tongue quite as well as King Charles. Robert died of grief at the news; and Scotland fell into the hands of his brother, the Duke of Albany, whose one aim was that his nephew should remain a prisoner. James grew up at the English Court; and prisoner though he was, the excellence of his training was seen in the poetry and intelligence of his later life. But with its King as a hostage Scotland was no longer to be dreaded as a foe. France too was weakened at this moment; for in 1405 the long smouldering jealousy between the Dukes of Orleans and of Burgundy broke out at last into open strife. The break did little indeed to check the desultory hostilities which were going on. A Breton fleet made descents on Portland and Dartmouth. The Count of Armagnac, the strongest supporter of Orleans

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and the war party, led troops against the frontier of Guienne. But the weakness of France and the exhaustion of its treasury prevented any formal denunciation of the truce or declaration of war. Though Henry could spare not a soldier for Guienne Armagnac did little hurt. An English fleet repaid the ravages of the Bretons by harrying the coast of Brittany; and the turn of French politics soon gave Frenchmen too much work at home to spare men for work abroad. At the close of 1407 the murder of the Duke of Orleans by the order of the Duke of Burgundy changed the weak and fitful strife which had been going on into a struggle of the bitterest hate. The Count of Armagnac placed himself at the head of the murdered duke's partizans; and in their furious antagonism Armagnac and Burgundian alike sought aid from the English King.

Prince
Henry.

But the fortune which favoured Henry elsewhere was still slow to turn in the West. In the opening of 1405 the King's son, Henry Prince of Wales, had taken the field against Glyndwr. Young as he was, Henry was already a tried soldier. As a boy of thirteen he had headed an incursion into Scotland in the year of his father's accession to the throne. At fifteen he fought in the front of the royal army in the desperate fight at Shrewsbury. Slight and tall in stature as he seemed, he had outgrown the weakness of his earlier years and was vigorous and swift of foot; his manners were courteous, his air grave and reserved; and though wild tales ran of revels and riots among his friends, the poets whom he favoured and Lydgate whom he set to translate "the dreary piteous tale of him of Troy" saw in him a youth "both manful and vertuous." There was little time indeed for mere riot in a life so busy as Henry's, nor were many opportunities for self-indulgence to be found in campaigns against Glyndwr. What fitted the young general of seventeen for the thankless work in Wales was his stern, immovable will. But fortune as yet had few smiles for the

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King in this quarter, and his constant ill-success continued to wake fresh troubles within England itself. The repulse of the young prince in a spring campaign in 1405 was at once followed by a revolt in the north. The pardon of Northumberland had left him still a foe; the Earl of Nottingham was son of Henry's opponent, the banished Duke of Norfolk; Scrope, Archbishop of York, was brother of Richard's counsellor, the Earl of Wiltshire, who had been beheaded on the surrender of Bristol. Their rising in May might have proved a serious danger had not the treachery of Ralph Neville, the Earl of Westmoreland, who still remained steady to the Lancastrian cause, secured the arrest of some of its leaders. Scrope and Lord Nottingham were beheaded, while Northumberland and his partizan Lord Bardolf fled into Scotland and from thence to Wales. Succours from France stirred the King to a renewed attack on Glyndwr in November; but with the same ill-success. Storms and want of food wrecked the English army and forced it to retreat; a year of rest raised Glyndwr to new strength; and when the long promised body of eight thousand Frenchmen joined him in 1407 he ventured even to cross the border and to threaten Worcester. The threat was a vain one and the Welsh army soon withdrew; but the insult gave fresh heart to Henry's foes, and in 1408 Northumberland and Bardolf again appeared in the north. Their overthrow at Bramham Moor put an end to the danger from the Percies; for Northumberland and Bardolf alike fell on the field. But Wales remained as defiant as ever. In 1409 a body of Welshmen poured ravaging into Shropshire; many of the English towns had fallen into Glyndwr's hands; and some of the marcher-lords made private truces with him.

The weakness which was produced by this ill-success in the West as well as these constant battlings with disaffection within the realm was seen in the attitude of the Lollards. Lollardry was far from having been crushed by the Statute of Heresy. The death of the Earl of Salisbury

Oldcastle.

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in the first of the revolts against Henry's throne, though his gory head was welcomed into London by a procession of abbots and bishops who went out singing psalms of thanksgiving to meet it, only transferred the leadership of the party to one of the foremost warriors of the time, Sir John Oldcastle. If we believe his opponents, and we have no information about him save from hostile sources, he was of lowly origin, and his rise must have been due to his own capacity and services to the Crown. In his youth he had listened to the preaching of Wyclif, and his Lollardry—if we may judge from its tone in later years—was a violent fanaticism. But this formed no obstacle to his rise in Richard's reign; his marriage with the heiress of that house made him Lord Cobham; and the accession of Henry of Lancaster, to whose cause he seems to have clung in these younger days, brought him fairly to the front. His skill in arms found recognition in his appointment as sheriff of Herefordshire and as castellan of Brecknock; and he was among the leaders who were chosen in later years for service in France. His warlike renown endeared him to the King, and Prince Henry counted him among the most illustrious of his servants. The favour of the royal house was the more notable that Oldcastle was known as "leader and captain" of the Lollards. His Kentish castle of Cowling served as the headquarters of the sect, and their preachers were openly entertained at his houses in London or on the Welsh border. The Convocation of 1413 charged him with being "the principal receiver, favourer, protector, and defender of them; and that, especially in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, he hath sent out the said Lollards to preach . . . and hath been present at their wicked sermons, grievously punishing with threatenings, terror, and the power of the secular sword such as did withstand them, alleging and affirming among other matters that we, the bishops, had no power to make any such Constitutions," as the Provincial Constitutions in which they had for-

bidden the preaching of unlicensed preachers. The bold stand of Lord Cobham drew fresh influence from the sanctity of his life. Though the clergy charged him with the foulest heresy, they owned that he shrouded it "under a veil of holiness." What chiefly moved their wrath was that he "armed the hands of laymen for the spoil of the Church." The phrase seems to hint that Oldcastle was the mover in the repeated attempts of the Commons to supply the needs of the state by a confiscation of Church property. In 1404 they prayed that the needs of the kingdom might be defrayed by a confiscation of Church lands, and though this prayer was fiercely met by Archbishop Arundel it was renewed in 1410. The Commons declared as before that by devoting the revenues of the prelates to the service of the state maintenance could be made for fifteen earls, fifteen hundred knights, and six thousand squires, while a hundred hospitals might be established for the sick and infirm. Such proposals had been commonly made by the baronial party with which the house of Lancaster had in former days been connected, and hostile as they were to the Church as an establishment they had no necessary connexion with any hostility to its doctrines. But a direct sympathy with Lollardism was seen in the further proposals of the Commons. They prayed for the abolition of episcopal jurisdiction over the clergy and for a mitigation of the Statute of Heresy.

But formidable as the movement seemed it found a formidable opponent. The steady fighting of Prince Henry had at last met the danger from Wales, and Glyndwr, though still unconquered, saw district after district submit again to English rule. From Wales the Prince returned to bring his will to bear on England itself. It was through his strenuous opposition that the proposals of the Commons in 1410 were rejected by the Lords. He gave at the same moment a more terrible proof of his loyalty to the Church in personally assisting at the burning of a layman, Thomas Badby, for a denial of transubstantiation. The prayers of

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Henry.

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the sufferer were taken for a recantation, and the Prince ordered the fire to be plucked away. But when the offer of life and a pension failed to break the spirit of the Lollard Henry pitilessly bade him be hurled back to his doom. The Prince was now the virtual ruler of the realm. His father's earlier popularity had disappeared amidst the troubles and heavy taxation of his reign. He was already a victim to the attack of epilepsy which brought him to the grave; and in the opening of 1410 the Parliament called for the appointment of a Continual Council. The Council was appointed, and the Prince placed at its head. His energy was soon seen in a more active interposition in the affairs of France. So bitter had the hatred grown between the Burgundian and Armagnac parties that both in turn appealed again to England for help. The Burgundian alliance found favour with the Council. In August, 1411, the Duke of Burgundy offered his daughter in marriage to the Prince as the price of English aid, and four thousand men with Lord Cobham among their leaders were sent to join his forces at Paris. Their help enabled Duke John to bring his opponents to battle at St. Cloud, and to win a decisive victory in November. But already the King was showing himself impatient of the Council's control; and the Parliament significantly prayed that "as there had been a great murmur among your people that you have had in your heart a heavy load against some of your lieges come to this present Parliament," they might be formally declared to be "faithful lieges and servants." The prayer was granted, but in spite of the support which the Houses gave to the Prince, Henry the Fourth was resolute to assert his power. At the close of 1411 he declared his will to stand in as great freedom, prerogative, and franchise as any of his predecessors had done, and annulled on that ground the appointment of the Continual Council.

*Death of
Henry the
Fourth.*

The King's blow had been dealt at the instigation of his Queen, and it seems to have been prompted as much by

a resolve to change the outer policy which the Prince had adopted as to free himself from the Council. The dismissal of the English troops by John of Burgundy after his victory at St. Cloud had irritated the English Court; and the Duke of Orleans took advantage of this turn of feeling to offer Catharine, the French King's daughter, in marriage to the Prince, and to promise the restoration of all that England claimed in Guienne and Poitou. In spite of the efforts of the Prince and the Duke of Burgundy a treaty of alliance with Orleans was signed on these terms in May, 1412, and a force under the King's second son, the Duke of Clarence, disembarked at La Hogue. But the very profusion of the Orleanist offers threw doubt on their sincerity. The Duke was only using the English aid to put a pressure on his antagonist, and its landing in August at once brought John of Burgundy to a seeming submission. While Clarence penetrated by Normandy and Maine into the Orleanois and a second English force sailed for Calais, both the French parties joined in pledging their services to King Charles "against his adversary of England." Before this union Clarence was forced in November to accept promise of payment for his men from the Duke of Orleans and to fall back on Bordeaux. The failure no doubt gave fresh strength to Prince Henry. In the opening of 1412 he had been discharged from the Council and Clarence set in his place at its head; he had been defeated in his attempts to renew the Burgundian alliance, and had striven in vain to hinder Clarence from sailing. The break grew into an open quarrel. Letters were sent into various counties refuting the charges of the Prince's detractors, and in September Henry himself appeared before his father with a crowd of his friends and supporters demanding the punishment of those who accused him. The charges made against him were that he sought to bring about the King's removal from the throne; and "the great recourse of people unto him, of which his court was at all times more abundant than his father's," gave colour to the

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CHAP. V. accusation. Henry the Fourth owned his belief in these charges, but promised to call a Parliament for his son's vindication; and the Parliament met in the February of 1413. But a new attack of epilepsy had weakened the King's strength; and though galleys were gathered for a Crusade which he had vowed he was too weak to meet the Houses on their assembly. If we may trust a charge which was afterwards denied, the King's half-brother, Bishop Henry of Winchester, one of the Beaufort children of John of Gaunt, acting in secret co-operation with the Prince, now brought the peers to pray Henry to suffer his son to be crowned in his stead. The King's refusal was the last act of a dying man. Before the end of March he breathed his last in the "Jerusalem Chamber" within the Abbot's house at Westminster; and the Prince obtained the crown which he had sought.

Suppression of the Lollards. The removal of Archbishop Arundel from the Chancellorship, which was given to Henry Beaufort of Winchester, was among the first acts of Henry the Fifth; and it is probable that this blow at the great foe of the Lollards gave encouragement to the hopes of Oldcastle. He seized the opportunity of the coronation in April to press his opinions on the young King, though probably rather with a view to the plunder of the Church than to any directly religious end. From the words of the clerical chroniclers it is plain that Henry had no mind as yet for any open strife with either party, and that he quietly put the matter aside. He was in fact busy with foreign affairs. The Duke of Clarence was recalled from Bordeaux, and a new truce concluded with France. The policy of Henry was clearly to look on for awhile at the shifting politics of the distracted kingdom. Soon after his accession another revolution in Paris gave the charge of the mad King Charles, and with it the nominal government of the realm, to the Duke of Orleans; and his cause derived fresh strength from the support of the young Dauphin, who was afterwards to play so great a part in the history of France as Charles the Seventh. John

of Burgundy withdrew to Flanders, and both parties again sought Henry's aid. But his hands were tied as yet by trouble at home. Oldcastle was far from having abandoned his projects, discouraged as they had been by his master; while the suspicions of Henry's favour to the Lollard cause which could hardly fail to be roused by his favour to the Lollard leader only spurred the bold spirit of Arundel to energetic action. A council of bishops gathered in the summer to denounce Lollardry and at once called on Henry to suffer Oldcastle to be brought to justice. The King pleaded for delay in the case of one who was so close a friend, and strove personally to convince Lord Cobham of his errors. All however was in vain, and Oldcastle withdrew to his castle of Cowling, while Arundel summoned him before his court and convicted him as a heretic. His open defiance at last forced the King to act. In September a body of royal troops arrested Lord Cobham and carried him to the Tower; but his life was still spared, and after a month's confinement his imprisonment was relaxed on his promise of recantation. Cobham however had now resolved on open resistance. He broke from the Tower in November, and from his hiding-place organized a vast revolt. At the opening of 1414 a secret order summoned the Lollards to assemble in St. Giles's Fields outside London. We gather, if not the real aims of the rising, at least the terror it caused, from Henry's statement that its purpose was "to destroy himself, his brothers, and several of the spiritual and temporal lords;" from Cobham's later declarations it is probable that the pretext of the rising was to release Richard, whom he asserted to be still alive, and to set him again on the throne. But the vigilance of the young King prevented the junction of the Lollards within the city with their confederates without, and these as they appeared at the place of meeting were dispersed by the royal troops.

The failure of the rising only increased the rigour of the law. Magistrates were directed to arrest all heretics and hand them over to the bishops; a conviction of heresy was

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of the
French
War*

made to entail forfeiture of blood and estate; and the execution of thirty-nine prominent Lollards as traitors gave terrible earnest of the King's resolve to suppress their sect. Oldecastle escaped, and for four years longer strove to rouse revolt after revolt. He was at last captured on the Welsh border and burned as a heretic; but from the moment when his attempt at revolt was crushed in St. Giles's Fields the dread of Lollardry was broken and Henry was free to take a more energetic course of policy on the other side the sea. He had already been silently preparing for action by conciliatory measures, by restoring Henry Percy's son to the Earldom of Northumberland, by the release of the Earl of March, and by the solemn burial of Richard the Second at Westminster. The suppression of the Lollard revolt was followed by a demand for the restoration of the English possessions in France, and by alliances and preparations for war. Burgundy stood aloof in a sullen neutrality, and the Duke of Orleans, who was now virtually ruler of the French kingdom, in vain proposed concession after concession. All negotiation indeed broke down when Henry formally put forward his claim on the crown of France. No claim could have been more utterly baseless, for the Parliamentary title by which the House of Lancaster held England could give it no right over France, and the strict law of hereditary succession which Edward asserted could be pleaded, if pleaded at all, only by the House of Mortimer. Not only the claim indeed, but the very nature of the war itself was wholly different from that of Edward the Third. Edward had been forced into the struggle against his will by the ceaseless attacks of France, and his claim of the crown was little but an afterthought to secure the alliance of Flanders. The war of Henry on the other hand, though in form a mere renewal of the earlier struggle on the close of the truce made by Richard the Second, was in fact an aggression on the part of a nation tempted by the helplessness of its opponent and galled by the memory of former defeat.

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Its one excuse lay in the attacks which France for the past fifteen years had directed against the Lancastrian throne, its encouragement of every enemy without and of every traitor within. Henry may fairly have regarded such a ceaseless hostility, continued even through years of weakness, as forcing him in sheer self-defence to secure his realm against the weightier attack which might be looked for, should France recover her strength.

In the summer of 1415 the King prepared to sail from Southampton, when a plot reminded him of the insecurity of his throne. The Earl of March was faithful: but he was childless, and his claim would pass at his death through a sister who had wedded the Earl of Cambridge, a son of the Duke of York, to her child Richard, the Duke who was to play so great a part in the War of the Roses. It was to secure his boy's claims that the Earl of Cambridge seized on the King's departure to conspire with Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey to proclaim the Earl of March King. The plot however was discovered and the plotters beheaded before the King sailed in August for the Norman coast. His first exploit was the capture of Harfleur. Dysentery made havoc in his ranks during the siege, and it was with a mere handful of men that he resolved to insult the enemy by a daring march like that of Edward upon Calais. The discord however on which he probably reckoned for security vanished before the actual appearance of the invaders in the heart of France; and when his weary and half-starved force succeeded in crossing the Somme it found sixty thousand Frenchmen encamped on the field of Agincourt right across its line of march. Their position, flanked on either side by woods, but with a front so narrow that the dense masses were drawn up thirty men deep, though strong for purposes of defence was ill suited for attack; and the French leaders, warned by the experience of Crecy and Poitiers, resolved to await the English advance. Henry on the other hand had no choice between attack and unconditional surrender. His

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troops were starving, and the way to Calais lay across the French army. But the King's courage rose with the peril. A knight in his train wished that the thousands of stout warriors lying idle that night in England had been standing in his ranks. Henry answered with a burst of scorn. "I would not have a single man more," he replied. "If God give us the victory, it will be plain we owe it to His grace. If not, the fewer we are, the less loss for England." Starving and sick as they were, the handful of men whom he led shared the spirit of their king. As the chill rainy night passed away he drew up his army on the twenty-fifth of October and boldly gave battle. The English archers bared their arms and breasts to give fair play to "the crooked stick and the grey goose wing," but for which—as the rime ran—"England were but a fling," and with a great shout sprang forward to the attack. The sight of their advance roused the fiery pride of the French; the wise resolve of their leaders was forgotten, and the dense mass of men-at-arms plunged heavily forward through miry ground on the English front. But at the first sign of movement Henry had halted his line, and fixing in the ground the sharpened stakes with which each man was furnished his archers poured their fatal arrow flights into the hostile ranks. The carnage was terrible, for though the desperate charges of the French knight-hood at last drove the English archers to the neighbouring woods, from the skirt of these woods they were still able to pour their shot into the enemy's flanks, while Henry with the men-at-arms around him flung himself on the French line. In the terrible struggle which followed the King bore off the palm of bravery: he was felled once by a blow from a French mace and the crown of his helmet was cleft by the sword of the Duke of Alençon; but the enemy was at last broken, and the defeat of the main body of the French was followed by the rout of their reserve. The triumph was more complete, as the odds were even greater, than at Crécy. Eleven thousand Frenchmen lay

dead on the field, and more than a hundred princes and great lords were among the fallen.

The immediate result of the battle of Agincourt was small, for the English army was too exhausted for pursuit, and it made its way to Calais only to return to England. Through 1416 the war was limited to a contest for the command of the Channel, till the increasing bitterness of the strife between the Burgundians and Armagnacs and the consent of John of Burgundy to conclude an alliance encouraged Henry to resume his attempt to recover Normandy. Whatever may have been his aim in this enterprise—whether it were, as has been suggested, to provide a refuge for his house, should its power be broken in England, or simply to acquire a command of the seas—the patience and skill with which his object was accomplished raise him high in the rank of military leaders. Disembarking in July 1417 with an army of forty thousand men near the mouth of the Touque, he stormed Caen, received the surrender of Bayeux, reduced Alençon and Falaise, and detaching his brother the Duke of Gloucester in the spring of 1418 to occupy the Côtentin made himself master of Avranches and Domfront. With Lower Normandy wholly in his hands, he advanced upon Evreux, captured Louviers, and seizing Pont de l'Arche, threw his troops across the Seine. The end of these masterly movements was now revealed. Rouen was at this time the largest and wealthiest of the towns of France; its walls were defended by a powerful artillery; Alan Blanchard, a brave and resolute patriot, infused the fire of his own temper into the vast population; and the garrison, already strong, was backed by fifteen thousand citizens in arms. But the genius of Henry was more than equal to the difficulties with which he had to deal. He had secured himself from an attack on his rear by the reduction of Lower Normandy, his earlier occupation of Harfleur severed the town from the sea, and his conquest of Pont de l'Arche cut it off from relief on the side of Paris.

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Slowly but steadily the King drew his lines of investment round the doomed city; a flotilla was brought up from Harfleur, a bridge of boats thrown over the Seine above the town, the deep trenches of the besiegers protected by posts, and the desperate sallies of the garrison stubbornly beaten back. For six months Rouen held resolutely out, but famine told fast on the vast throng of country folk who had taken refuge within its walls. Twelve thousand of these were at last thrust out of the city gates, but the cold policy of the conqueror refused them passage, and they perished between the trenches and the walls. In the hour of their agony women gave birth to infants, but even the new-born babes which were drawn up in baskets to receive baptism were lowered again to die on their mothers' breasts. It was little better within the town itself. As winter drew on one-half of the population wasted away. "War," said the terrible King, "has three handmaidens ever waiting on her, Fire, Blood, and Famine, and I have chosen the meekest maid of the three." But his demand of unconditional surrender nerved the citizens to a resolve of despair; they determined to fire the city and fling themselves in a mass on the English lines; and Henry, fearful lest his prize should escape him at the last, was driven to offer terms. Those who rejected a foreign yoke were suffered to leave the city, but his vengeance reserved its victim in Alan Blanchard, and the brave patriot was at Henry's orders put to death in cold blood.

Death of
Henry the
Fifth.

A few sieges completed the reduction of Normandy. The King's designs were still limited to the acquisition of that province; and pausing in his career of conquest, he strove to win its loyalty by a remission of taxation and a redress of grievances, and to seal its possession by a formal peace with the French Crown. The conferences however which were held for this purpose at Pontoise in 1419 failed through the temporary reconciliation of the French factions, while the length and expense of the war began to rouse remonstrance and discontent at home. The King's diffi-

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culties were at their height when the assassination of John of Burgundy at Montereau in the very presence of the Dauphin with whom he had come to hold conference rekindled the fires of civil strife. The whole Burgundian party with the new Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good, at its head flung itself in a wild thirst for revenge into Henry's hands. The mad King, Charles the Sixth, with his Queen and daughters were in Philip's power; and in his resolve to exclude the Dauphin from the throne the Duke stooped to buy English aid by giving Catharine, the eldest of the French princesses, in marriage to Henry, by conferring on him the Regency during the life of Charles, and recognizing his succession to the crown at that sovereign's death. A treaty which embodied these terms was solemnly ratified by Charles himself in a conference at Troyes in May 1420; and Henry, who in his new capacity of Regent undertook to conquer in the name of his father-in-law the territory held by the Dauphin, reduced the towns of the Upper Seine and at Christmas entered Paris in triumph side by side with the King. The States-General of the realm were solemnly convened to the capital; and strange as the provisions of the Treaty of Troyes must have seemed they were confirmed without a murmur. Henry was formally recognized as the future sovereign of France. A defeat of his brother Clarence at Baugé in Anjou in the spring of 1421 called him back to the war. His re-appearance in the field was marked by the capture of Dreux, and a repulse before Orleans was redeemed in the summer of 1422 by his success in the long and obstinate siege of Meaux. At no time had the fortunes of Henry reached a higher pitch than at the moment when he felt the touch of death. In the month which followed the surrender of Meaux he fell ill at Corbeuil; the rapidity of his disease baffled the skill of the physicians; and at the close of August, with a strangely characteristic regret that he had not lived to achieve the conquest of Jerusalem, the great Conqueror passed away.

CHAPTER VI.
THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

1422—1461.

*Plans of
Henry V.*

AT the moment when death so suddenly stayed his course the greatness of Henry the Fifth had reached its highest point. In England his victories had hushed the last murmurs of disaffection. The death of the Earl of Cambridge, the childhood of his son, removed all danger from the claims of the house of York. The ruin of Lord Cobham, the formal condemnation of Wyclif's doctrines in the Council of Constance, broke the political and the religious strength of Lollardry. Henry had won the Church by his orthodoxy, the nobles by his warlike prowess, the whole people by his revival of the glories of Crécy and Poitiers. In France his cool policy had transformed him from a foreign conqueror into a legal heir to the crown. The King was in his hands, the Queen devoted to his cause, the Duke of Burgundy was his ally, his title of Regent and of successor to the throne rested on the formal recognition of the estates of the realm. Although southern France still clung to the Dauphin, the progress of Henry to the very moment of his death promised a speedy mastery of the whole country. His European position was a commanding one. Lord of the two great western kingdoms, he was linked by close ties of blood with the royal lines of Portugal and Castille; and his restless activity showed itself in his efforts to procure the adoption of his

brother John as her successor by the Queen of Naples and in the marriage of a younger brother, Humphrey, with Jacqueline, the Countess of Holland and Hainault. Dreams of a vaster enterprize filled the soul of the great conqueror himself; he loved to read the story of Godfrey of Bouillon and cherished the hope of a crusade which should beat back the Ottoman and again rescue the Holy Land from heathen hands. Such a crusade might still have saved Constantinople, and averted from Europe the danger which threatened it through the century that followed the fall of the imperial city. Nor was the enterprize a dream in the hands of the cool, practical warrior and ruler of whom a contemporary could say "he transacts all his affairs himself, he considers well before he undertakes them, he never does anything fruitlessly."

But the hopes of far off conquests found a sudden close in Henry's death. His son, Henry the Sixth of England, was a child of but nine months old: and though he was peacefully recognized as King in his English realm and as heir to the throne in the realm of France his position was a very different one from his father's. The death of King Charles indeed, two months after that of his son-in-law, did little to weaken it; and at first nothing seemed lost. The Dauphin at once proclaimed himself Charles the Seventh of France: but Henry was owned as Sovereign over the whole of the territory which Charles had actually ruled; and the incursions which the partizans of Charles, now reinforced by Lombard soldiers from the Milanese and by four thousand Scots under the Earl of Douglas, made with fresh vigour across the Loire were easily repulsed by Duke John of Bedford, the late King's brother, who had been named in his will Regent of France. In genius for war as in political capacity John was hardly inferior to Henry himself. Drawing closer his alliance with the Duke of Burgundy by marriage with that prince's sister, and holding that of Brittany by a patient diplomacy, he completed the conquest of Northern

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*John of
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France, secured his communications with Normandy by the capture of Meulan, and made himself master of the line of the Yonne by a victory near Auxerre. In 1424 the Constable of Buchan pushed from the Loire to the very borders of Normandy to arrest his progress, and attacked the English army at Verneuil. But a repulse hardly less disastrous than that of Agincourt left a third of the French knighthood on the field: and the Regent was preparing to cross the Loire for a final struggle with "the King of Bourges" as the English in mockery called Charles the Seventh when his career of victory was broken by troubles at home.

Humphrey
of Glou-
cester.

In England the Lancastrian throne was still too newly established to remain unshaken by the succession of a child of nine months old. Nor was the younger brother of Henry the Fifth, Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, whom the late King's will named as Regent of the realm, a man of the same noble temper as the Duke of Bedford. Intellectually the figure of Humphrey is one of extreme interest, for he is the first Englishman in whom we can trace the faint influence of that revival of knowledge which was to bring about the coming renaissance of the western world. Humphrey was not merely a patron of poets and men of letters, of Lydgate and William of Worcester and Abbot Whethamstede of St. Alban's, as his brother and other princes of the day had been, but his patronage seems to have sprung from a genuine interest in learning itself. He was a zealous collector of books and was able to bequeath to the University of Oxford a library of a hundred and thirty volumes. A gift of books indeed was a passport to his favour, and before the title of each volume he possessed the Duke wrote words which expressed his love of them, "moun bien mondain," "my worldly goods!" Lydgate tells us how "notwithstanding his state and dignyte his corage never doth appalle to studie in books of antiquitie." His studies drew him to the revival of classic learning which was becoming a

passion across the Alps. One wandering scholar from Forli, who took the pompous name of Titus Livius and who wrote at his request the biography of Henry the Fifth, Humphrey made his court poet and orator. The Duke probably aided Poggio Bracciolini in his search for classical manuscripts when he visited England in 1420. Leonardo Aretino, one of the scholars who gathered about Cosmo de Medici, dedicated to him a translation of the *Politics* of Aristotle, and when another Italian scholar sent him a fragment of a translation of Plato's *Republic* the Duke wrote to beg him to send the rest. But with its love of learning Humphrey combined the restlessness, the immorality, the selfish, boundless ambition which characterized the age of the Renaissance. His life was sullied by sensual excesses, his greed of power shook his nephew's throne. So utterly was he already distrusted that the late King's nomination of him as Regent was set aside by the royal Council and he was suffered only to preside at its deliberations with the nominal title of Protector during Bedford's absence. The real direction of affairs fell into the hands of his uncle, Henry Beaufort, the Bishop of Winchester, a legitimated son of John of Gaunt by his mistress Catharine Swynford.

Two years of useless opposition disgusted the Duke with this nominal Protectorship, and in 1424 he left the realm to push his fortunes in the Netherlands. Jacqueline, the daughter and heiress of William, Count of Holland and Hainault, had originally wedded John, Duke of Brabant; but after a few years of strife she had procured a divorce from one of the three claimants who now disputed the Papacy, and at the close of Henry the Fifth's reign she had sought shelter in England. At his brother's death the Duke of Gloucester avowed his marriage with her and adopted her claims as his own. To support them in arms however was to alienate Philip of Burgundy, who was already looking forward to the inheritance of his childless nephew, the Duke of Brabant; and as the alliance with Burgundy was the main strength of the English cause in

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CHAP. VI. France, neither Bedford, who had shown his sense of its value by a marriage with the Duke's sister, nor the English council were likely to support measures which would imperil or weaken it. Such considerations however had little weight with Humphrey; and in October 1424 he set sail for Calais without their knowledge with a body of five thousand men. In a few months he succeeded in restoring Hainault to Jacqueline, and Philip at once grew lukewarm in his adherence to the English cause. Though Bedford's efforts prevented any final break, the Duke withdrew his forces from France to aid John of Brabant in the recovery of Hainault and Holland. Gloucester challenged Philip to decide their claims by single combat. But the enterprize was abandoned as hastily as it had been begun. The Duke of Gloucester was already disgusted with Jacqueline and enamoured of a lady in her suite, Eleanor, the daughter of Lord Cobham; and in the summer of 1425 he suddenly returned with her to England and left his wife to defend herself as she might.

*Henry
Beaufort.*

What really called him back was more than his passion for Eleanor Cobham or the natural versatility of his temper; it was the advance of a rival in England to further power over the realm. This was his uncle, Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester. The bishop had already played a leading political part. He was charged with having spurred Henry the Fifth to the ambitious demands of power which he made during his father's lifetime; he became chancellor on his accession; and at his death the king left him guardian of the person of his boy. He looked on Gloucester's ambition as a danger to his charge, withstood his recognition as Regent, and remained at the head of the Council that reduced his office of Protector to a name. The Duke's absence in Hainault gave fresh strength to his opponent: and the nomination of the Bishop to the Chancellorship marked him out as the virtual ruler of the realm. On the news of this appointment Gloucester

hurried back to accept what he looked on as a challenge to open strife. The Londoners rose in his name to attack Beaufort's palace in Southwark, and at the close of 1425 Bedford had to quit his work in France to appease the strife. In the following year Gloucester laid a formal bill of accusation against the bishop before the Parliament, but its rejection forced him to a show of reconciliation, and Bedford was able to return to France. Hardly was he gone however when the quarrel began anew. Humphrey found a fresh weapon against Beaufort in his acceptance of the dignity of a Cardinal and of a Papal Legate in England; and the jealousy which this step aroused drove the Bishop to withdraw for a while from the Council and to give place to his unscrupulous opponent.

Beaufort possessed an administrative ability, the loss of which was a heavy blow to the struggling Regent over sea, where Humphrey's restless ambition had already paralyzed Bedford's efforts. Much of his strength rested on his Burgundian ally, and the force of Burgundy was drawn to other quarters. Though Hainault had been easily won back on Gloucester's retreat and Jacqueline taken prisoner, her escape from prison enabled her to hold Holland for three years against the forces of the Duke of Brabant and after his death against those of the Duke of Burgundy to whom he bequeathed his dominions. The political strife in England itself was still more fatal in diverting the supplies of men and money which were needful for a vigorous prosecution of the war. To maintain even the handful of forces left to him Bedford was driven to have recourse to mere forays which did little but increase the general misery. The north of France indeed was being fast reduced to a desert by the bands of marauders which traversed it. The husbandmen fled for refuge to the towns till these in fear of famine shut their gates against them. Then in their despair they threw themselves into the woods and became brigands in their turn. So terrible was the devastation that two hostile bodies of troops failed at one time even to

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*Siege of
Orleans.*

CHAP. VI. find one another in the desolate Beauce. Misery and disease killed a hundred thousand people in Paris alone. At last the cessation of the war in Holland and the temporary lull of strife in England enabled the Regent to take up again his long interrupted advance upon the South. Orleans was the key to the Loire; and its reduction would throw open Bourges where Charles held his court. Bedford's resources indeed were still inadequate for such a siege; and though the arrival of reinforcements from England under the Earl of Salisbury enabled him to invest it in October 1428 with ten thousand men, the fact that so small a force could undertake the siege of such a town as Orleans shows at once the exhaustion of England and the terror which still hung over France. As the siege went on however even these numbers were reduced. A new fit of jealousy on the part of the Duke of Burgundy brought about a recall of his soldiers from the siege, and after their withdrawal only three thousand Englishmen remained in the trenches. But the long series of English victories had so demoralized the French soldiery that in February 1429 a mere detachment of archers under Sir John Fastolfe repulsed a whole army in what was called 'the Battle of the Herrings' from the convoy of provisions which the victors brought in triumph into the camp before Orleans. Though the town swarmed with men-at-arms not a single sally was ventured on through the six months' siege, and Charles the Seventh did nothing for its aid but shut himself up in Chinon and weep helplessly.

*Jeanne
Darc.*

But the success of this handful of besiegers rested wholly on the spell of terror which had been cast over France, and at this moment the appearance of a peasant maiden broke the spell. Jeanne Darc was the child of a labourer of Domremy, a little village in the neighbourhood of Vaucouleurs on the borders of Lorraine and Champagne. Just without the cottage where she was born began the great woods of the Vosges where the children of Domremy drank in poetry and legend from fairy ring and

haunted well, hung their flower garlands on the sacred trees, and sang songs to the "good people" who might not drink of the fountain because of their sins. Jeanne loved the forest; its birds and beasts came lovingly to her at her childish call. But at home men saw nothing in her but "a good girl, simple and pleasant in her ways," spinning and sewing by her mother's side while the other girls went to the fields, tender to the poor and sick, fond of church, and listening to the church-bell with a dreamy passion of delight which never left her. This quiet life was broken by the storm of war as it at last came home to Domremy. As the outcasts and wounded passed by the little village the young peasant girl gave them her bed and nursed them in their sickness. Her whole nature summed itself up in one absorbing passion: she "had pity," to use the phrase for ever on her lip, "on the fair realm of France." As her passion grew she recalled old prophecies that a maid from the Lorraine border should save the land; she saw visions; St. Michael appeared to her in a flood of blinding light, and bade her go to the help of the King and restore to him his realm. "Messire," answered the girl, "I am but a poor maiden; I know not how to ride to the wars, or to lead men-at-arms." The archangel returned to give her courage, and to tell her of "the pity" that there was in heaven for the fair realm of France. The girl wept and longed that the angels who appeared to her would carry her away, but her mission was clear. It was in vain that her father when he heard her purpose swore to drown her ere she should go to the field with men-at-arms. It was in vain that the priest, the wise people of the village, the captain of Vaucouleurs, doubted and refused to aid her. "I must go to the King," persisted the peasant girl, "even if I wear my limbs to the very knees." "I had far rather rest and spin by my mother's side," she pleaded with a touching pathos, "for this is no work of my choosing, but I must go and do it, for my Lord wills it." "And who," they asked, "is your Lord?" "He is God." Words

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such as these touched the rough captain at last: he took Jeanne by the hand and swore to lead her to the King. She reached Chinon in the opening of March, but here too she found hesitation and doubt. The theologians proved from their books that they ought not to believe her. "There is more in God's book than in yours," Jeanne answered simply. At last Charles himself received her in the midst of a throng of nobles and soldiers. "Gentle Dauphin," said the girl, "my name is Jeanne the Maid. The Heavenly King sends me to tell you that you shall be anointed and crowned in the town of Rheims, and you shall be lieutenant of the Heavenly King who is the King of France."

Relief of
Orleans.

Orleans had already been driven by famine to offers of surrender when Jeanne appeared in the French court, and a force was gathering under the Count of Dunois at Blois for a final effort at its relief. It was at the head of this force that Jeanne placed herself. The girl was in her eighteenth year, tall, finely formed, with all the vigour and activity of her peasant rearing, able to stay from dawn to nightfall on horseback without meat or drink. As she mounted her charger, clad in white armour from head to foot, with a great white banner studded with fleur-de-lys waving over her head, she seemed "a thing wholly divine, whether to see or hear." The ten thousand men-at-arms who followed her from Blois, rough plunderers whose only prayer was that of La Hire, "Sire Dieu, I pray you to do for La Hire what La Hire would do for you, were you captain-at-arms and he God," left off their oaths and foul living at her word and gathered round the altars on their march. Her shrewd peasant humour helped her to manage the wild soldiery, and her followers laughed over their camp-fires at an old warrior who had been so puzzled by her prohibition of oaths that she suffered him still to swear by his bâton. For in the midst of her enthusiasm her good sense never left her. The people crowded round her as she rode along, praying her to work miracles, and bringing crosses and chaplets to be blest by her touch. "Touch

them yourself," she said to an old Dame Margaret; "your touch will be just as good as mine." But her faith in her mission remained as firm as ever. "The Maid prays and requires you," she wrote to Bedford, "to work no more distraction in France but to come in her company to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Turk." "I bring you," she told Dunois when he sallied out of Orleans to meet her after her two days' march from Blois, "I bring you the best aid ever sent to any one, the aid of the King of Heaven." The besiegers looked on overawed as she entered Orleans and, riding round the walls, bade the people shake off their fear of the forts which surrounded them. Her enthusiasm drove the hesitating generals to engage the handful of besiegers, and the enormous disproportion of forces at once made itself felt. Fort after fort was taken till only the strongest remained, and then the council of war resolved to adjourn the attack. "You have taken your counsel," replied Jeanne, "and I take mine." Placing herself at the head of the men-at-arms, she ordered the gates to be thrown open, and led them against the fort. Few as they were, the English fought desperately, and the Maid, who had fallen wounded while endeavouring to scale its walls, was borne into a vineyard, while Dunois sounded the retreat. "Wait a while!" the girl imperiously pleaded, "eat and drink! so soon as my standard touches the wall you shall enter the fort." It touched, and the assailants burst in. On the next day the siege was abandoned, and on the eighth of May the force which had conducted it withdrew in good order to the north.

In the midst of her triumph Jeanne still remained the pure, tender-hearted peasant girl of the Vosges. Her first visit as she entered Orleans was to the great church, and there, as she knelt at mass, she wept in such a passion of devotion that "all the people wept with her." Her tears burst forth afresh at her first sight of bloodshed and of the corpses strewn over the battle-field. She grew frightened

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Corona-
tion of
Charles.

CHAP. VI. at her first wound, and only threw off the touch of womanly fear when she heard the signal for retreat. Yet more womanly was the purity with which she passed through the brutal warriors of a mediæval camp. It was her care for her honour that led her to clothe herself in a soldier's dress. She wept hot tears when told of the foul taunts of the English, and called passionately on God to witness her chastity. "Yield thee, yield thee, Glasdale," she cried to the English warrior whose insults had been foulest as he fell wounded at her feet, "you called me harlot! I have great pity on your soul." But all thought of herself was lost in the thought of her mission. It was in vain that the French generals strove to remain on the Loire. Jeanne was resolute to complete her task, and while the English remained panic-stricken around Paris she brought Charles to march upon Rheims, the old crowning-place of the Kings of France. Troyes and Chalons submitted as she reached them, Rheims drove out the English garrison and threw open her gates to the king.

Capture of Jeanne. With his coronation the Maid felt her errand to be over. "O gentle King, the pleasure of God is done," she cried, as she flung herself at the feet of Charles and asked leave to go home. "Would it were His good will," she pleaded with the Archbishop as he forced her to remain, "that I might go and keep sheep once more with my sisters and my brothers: they would be so glad to see me again!" But the policy of the French Court detained her while the cities of the North of France opened their gates to the newly-consecrated King. Bedford however, who had been left without money or men, had now received reinforcements. Excluded as Cardinal Beaufort had been from the Council by Gloucester's intrigues, he poured his wealth without stint into the exhausted treasury till his loans to the Crown reached the sum of half-a-million; and at this crisis he unscrupulously diverted an army which he had levied at his own cost for a crusade against the Hussites in Bohemia to his nephew's aid. The tide of success turned

again. Charles, after a repulse before the walls of Paris, fell back behind the Loire; while the towns on the Oise submitted anew to the Duke of Burgundy, whose more active aid Bedford had bought by the cession of Champagne. In the struggle against Duke Philip Jeanne fought with her usual bravery but with the fatal consciousness that her mission was at an end, and during the defence of Compiègne in the May of 1430 she fell into the power of the Bastard of Vendôme, to be sold by her captor into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy and by the Duke into the hands of the English. To the English her triumphs were victories of sorcery, and after a year's imprisonment she was brought to trial on a charge of heresy before an ecclesiastical court with the Bishop of Beauvais at its head.

Throughout the long process which followed every art was used to entangle her in her talk. But the simple shrewdness of the peasant girl foiled the efforts of her judges. "Do you believe," they asked, "that you are in a state of grace?" "If I am not," she replied, "God will put me in it. If I am, God will keep me in it." Her capture, they argued, showed that God had forsaken her. "Since it has pleased God that I should be taken," she answered meekly, "it is for the best." "Will you submit," they demanded at last, "to the judgement of the Church Militant?" "I have come to the King of France," Jeanne replied, "by commission from God and from the Church Triumphant above: to that Church I submit." "I had far rather die," she ended passionately, "than renounce what I have done by my Lord's command." They deprived her of mass. "Our Lord can make me hear it without your aid," she said, weeping. "Do your voices," asked the judges, "forbid you to submit to the Church and the Pope?" "Ah, no! our Lord first served." Sick, and deprived of all religious aid, it was no wonder that as the long trial dragged on and question followed question Jeanne's firmness wavered. On the charge of sorcery and diabolical possession she still appealed firmly

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to God. "I hold to my Judge," she said, as her earthly judges gave sentence against her, "to the King of Heaven and Earth. God has always been my Lord in all that I have done. The devil has never had power over me." It was only with a view to be delivered from the military prison and transferred to the prisons of the Church that she consented to a formal abjuration of heresy. She feared in fact among the soldiery those outrages to her honour, to guard against which she had from the first assumed the dress of a man. In the eyes of the Church her dress was a crime and she abandoned it; but a renewed affront forced her to resume the one safeguard left her, and the return to it was treated as a relapse into heresy which doomed her to death. At the close of May, 1431, a great pile was raised in the market-place of Rouen where her statue stands now. Even the brutal soldiers who snatched the hated "witch" from the hands of the clergy and hurried her to her doom were hushed as she reached the stake. One indeed passed to her a rough cross he had made from a stick he held, and she clasped it to her bosom. As her eyes ranged over the city from the lofty scaffold she was heard to murmur, "Oh Rouen, Rouen, I have great fear lest you suffer for my death." "Yes! my voices were of God!" she suddenly cried as the last moment came; "they have never deceived me!" Soon the flames reached her, the girl's head sank on her breast, there was one cry of "Jesus!"—"We are lost," an English soldier muttered as the crowd broke up; "we have burned a Saint."

*Death of
Bedford.*

The English cause was indeed irretrievably lost. In spite of a pompous coronation of the boy-king Henry at Paris at the close of 1431, Bedford with the cool wisdom of his temper seems to have abandoned from this time all hope of permanently retaining France and to have fallen back on his brother's original plan of securing Normandy. Henry's Court was established for a year at Rouen, a university founded at Caen, and whatever rapine and disorder might be permitted elsewhere, justice, good government,

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and security for trade were steadily maintained through the favoured provinces. At home Bedford was resolutely backed by Cardinal Beaufort, whose services to the state as well as his real powers had at last succeeded in outweighing Duke Humphrey's opposition and in restoring him to the head of the royal Council. Beaufort's diplomatic ability was seen in the truces he wrung from Scotland, and in his personal efforts to prevent the impending reconciliation of the Duke of Burgundy with the French King. But the death of the duke's sister, who was the wife of Bedford, severed the last link which bound Philip to the English cause. He pressed for peace: and conferences for this purpose were held at Arras in 1435. Their failure only served him as a pretext for concluding a formal treaty with Charles; and his desertion was followed by a yet more fatal blow to the English cause in the death of Bedford. The loss of the Regent was the signal for the loss of Paris. In the spring of 1436 the city rose suddenly against its English garrison and declared for King Charles. Henry's dominion shrank at once to Normandy and the outlying fortresses of Picardy and Maine. But reduced as they were to a mere handful, and fronted by a whole nation in arms, the English soldiers struggled on with as desperate a bravery as in their days of triumph. Lord Talbot, the most daring of their leaders, forded the Somme with the water up to his chin to relieve Crotoy, and threw his men across the Oise in the face of a French army to relieve Pontoise.

Bedford found for the moment an able and vigorous successor in the Duke of York. Richard of York was the son of the Earl of Cambridge who had been beheaded by Henry the Fifth; his mother was Anne, the heiress of the Mortimers and of their claim to the English crown as representatives of the third son of Edward the Third, Lionel of Clarence. It was to assert this claim on his son's behalf that the Earl embarked in the fatal plot which cost him his head. But his death left Richard a mere boy

*Richard
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in the wardship of the Crown, and for years to come all danger from his pretensions were at an end. Nor did the young Duke give any sign of a desire to assert them as he grew to manhood. He appeared content with a lineage and wealth which placed him at the head of the English baronage; for he had inherited from his uncle the Dukedom of York, his wide possessions embraced the estates of the families which united in him, the houses of York, of Clarence, and of Mortimer, and his double descent from Edward the Third, if it did no more, set him near to the Crown. The nobles looked up to him as the head of their order, and his political position recalled that of the Lancastrian Earls at an earlier time. But the position of Richard was as yet that of a faithful servant of the Crown; and as Regent of France he displayed the abilities both of a statesman and of a general. During the brief space of his regency the tide of ill fortune was stemmed; and towns and castles were recovered along the border.

*Eleanor
Cobham.*

His recall after a twelvemonth's success is the first indication of the jealousy which the ruling house felt of triumphs gained by one who might some day assert his claim to the throne. Two years later, in 1440, the Duke was restored to his post, but it was now too late to do more than stand on the defensive, and all York's ability was required to preserve Normandy and Maine. Men and money alike came scantily from England—where the Duke of Gloucester, freed from the check which Bedford had laid on him while he lived, was again stirring against Beaufort and the Council. But his influence had been weakened by a marriage with his mistress, Eleanor Cobham, and in 1441 it was all but destroyed by an incident which paints the temper of the time. The restless love of knowledge which was the one redeeming feature in Duke Humphrey's character drew to him not only scholars but a horde of the astrologers and claimants of magical powers who were the natural product of an age in which

the faith of the Middle Ages was dying out before the double attack of scepticism and heresy. Amongst these was a priest named Roger Bolinbroke. Bolinbroke was seized on a charge of compassing the King's death by sorcery; and the sudden flight of Eleanor Cobham to the sanctuary at Westminster was soon explained by a like accusation. Her judges found that she had made a waxen image of the King and slowly melted it at a fire, a process which was held to account for Henry's growing weakness both of body and mind. The Duchess was doomed to penance for her crime; she was led bareheaded and barefooted in a white penance-sheet through the streets of London, and then thrown into prison for life. Humphrey never rallied from the blow. But his retirement from public affairs was soon followed by that of his rival, Cardinal Beaufort. Age forced Beaufort to withdraw to Winchester; and the Council was from that time swayed mainly by the Earl of Suffolk, William de la Pole, a grandson of the minister of Richard the Second.

Few houses had served the Crown more faithfully than that of De la Pole. His father fell at the siege of Harfleur; his brother had been slain at Agincourt; William himself had served and been taken prisoner in the war with France. But as a statesman he was powerless in the hands of the Beauforts, and from this moment the policy of the Beauforts drew England nearer and nearer to the chaos of civil war. John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and his brother, Edmund, Earl of Dorset, were now the representatives of this house. They were grandsons of John of Gaunt by his mistress, Catharine Swynford. In later days Catharine became John's wife, and his uncle's influence over Richard at the close of that King's reign was shown in a royal ordinance which legitimated those of his children by her who had been born before marriage. The ordinance was confirmed by an Act of Parliament, which as it passed the Houses was expressed in the widest and most general terms; but before issuing this as a statute Henry the Fourth inserted

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Beauforts.*

CHAP. VI. provisions which left the Beauforts illegitimate in blood so far as regarded the inheritance of the crown. Such royal alterations of statutes however had been illegal since the time of Edward the Third; and the Beauforts never recognized the force of this provision. But whether they stood in the line of succession or no, the favour which was shown them alike by Henry the Fifth and his son drew them close to the throne, and the weakness of Henry the Sixth left them at this moment the mainstay of the House of Lancaster. Edmund Beaufort had taken an active part in the French wars, and had distinguished himself by the capture of Harfleur and the relief of Calais. But he was hated for his pride and avarice, and the popular hate grew as he showed his jealousy of the Duke of York. Loyal indeed as Richard had proved himself as yet, the pretensions of his house were the most formidable danger which fronted the throne; and with a weak and imbecile King we can hardly wonder that the Beauforts deemed it madness to leave in the Duke's hands the wide power of a Regent in France and the command of the armies across the sea. In 1444 York was recalled, and his post was taken by Edmund Beaufort himself.

*Loss of
Nor-
mandy.*

But the claim which York drew from the house of Mortimer was not his only claim to the crown; as the descendant of Edward the Third's fifth son the crown would naturally devolve upon him on the extinction of the House of Lancaster, and of the direct line of that house Henry the Sixth was the one survivor. It was to check these hopes by continuing the Lancastrian succession that Suffolk in 1445 brought about the marriage of the young King with Margaret, the daughter of Duke René of Anjou. But the marriage had another end. The English ministers were anxious for the close of the war; and in the kinship between Margaret and King Charles of France they saw a chance of bringing it about. A truce was concluded as a prelude to a future peace, and the marriage treaty paved the way for

it by ceding not only Anjou, of which England possessed nothing, but Maine, the bulwark of Normandy, to Duke René. For his part in this negotiation Suffolk was raised to the rank of marquis; but the terms of the treaty and the delays which still averted a final peace gave new strength to the war-party with Gloucester at its head, and troubles were looked for in the Parliament which met at the opening of 1447. The danger was roughly met. Gloucester was arrested as he rode to Parliament on a charge of secret conspiracy; and a few days later he was found dead in his lodging. Suspicions of murder were added to the hatred against Suffolk; and his voluntary submission to an enquiry by the Council into his conduct in the marriage treaty, which was followed by his acquittal of all blame, did little to counteract this. What was yet more fatal to Suffolk was the renewal of the war. In the face of the agitation against it the English ministers had never dared to execute the provisions of the marriage-treaty; and in 1448 Charles the Seventh sent an army to enforce the cession of Le Mans. Its surrender averted the struggle for a moment. But in the spring of 1449 a body of English soldiers from Normandy, mutinous at their want of pay, crossed the border and sacked the rich town of Fougères in Brittany. Edmund Beaufort, who had now succeeded to the dukedom of Somerset, protested his innocence of this breach of truce, but he either could not or would not make restitution, and the war was renewed. From this moment it was a mere series of French successes. In two months half Normandy was in the hands of Dunois; Rouen rose against her feeble garrison and threw open her gates to Charles; and the defeat at Fourmigny of an English force which was sent to Somerset's aid was a signal for revolt throughout the rest of the provinces. The surrender of Cherbourg in August, 1450, left Henry not a foot of Norman ground.

The loss of Normandy was generally laid to the charge of Somerset. He was charged with a miserly hoarding of

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supplies as well as planning in conjunction with Suffolk the fatal sack of Fougères. His incapacity as a general added to the resentment at his recall of the Duke of York, a recall which had been marked as a disgrace by the despatch of Richard into an honourable banishment as lieutenant of Ireland. But it was this very recall which proved most helpful to York. Had he remained in France he could hardly have averted the loss of Normandy, though he might have delayed it. As it was the shame of its loss fell upon Somerset, while the general hatred of the Beauforts and the growing contempt of the King whom they ruled expressed itself in a sudden rush of popular favour towards the man whom his disgrace had marked out as the object of their ill-will. From this moment the hopes of a better and a stronger government centred themselves in the Duke of York. The news of the French successes was at once followed by an outbreak of national wrath. Political ballads denounced Suffolk as the ape with his clog that had tied Talbot, the good "dog" who was longing to grip the Frenchmen. When the Bishop of Chichester, who had been sent to pay the sailors at Portsmouth, strove to put off the men with less than their due, they fell on him and slew him. Suffolk was impeached, and only saved from condemnation by submitting himself to the King's mercy. He was sent into exile, but as he crossed the sea he was intercepted by a ship of Kentishmen, beheaded, and his body thrown on the sands at Dover.

Revolt of
Kent.

Kent was the centre of the national resentment. It was the great manufacturing district of the day, seething with a busy population, and especially concerned with the French contest through the piracy of the Cinque Ports. Every house along its coast showed some spoil from the wars. Here more than anywhere the loss of the great province whose cliffs could be seen from its shores was felt as a crowning disgrace, and as we shall see from the after complaints of its insurgents political wrongs added their fire to the national shame. Justice was ill administered; taxation was

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unequal and extortionate. Redress for such evils would now naturally have been sought from Parliament; but the weakness of the Crown gave the great nobles power to rob the freeholders of their franchise and return the knights of the shire. Nor could redress be looked for from the Court. The murder of Suffolk was the act of Kentishmen, and Suffolk's friends still held control over the royal councils. The one hope of reform lay in arms; and in the summer of 1450, while the last of the Norman fortresses were throwing open their gates, the discontent broke into open revolt. The rising spread from Kent over Surrey and Sussex. Everywhere it was general and organized—a military levy of the yeomen of the three shires. The parishes sent their due contingent of armed men; we know that in many hundreds the constables formally summoned their legal force to war. The insurgents were joined by more than a hundred esquires and gentlemen; and two great landholders of Sussex, the Abbot of Battle and the Prior of Lewes, openly favoured their cause. John Cade, a soldier of some experience in the French wars, took at this crisis the significant name of Mortimer and placed himself at their head. The army, now twenty thousand men strong, marched in the beginning of June on Blackheath. On the advance of the King with an equal force however they determined to lay their complaint before the royal Council and withdraw to their homes. The "Complaint of the Commons of Kent," is of high value in the light which it throws on the condition of the people. Not one of the demands touches on religious reform. The question of villeinage and serfage finds no place in it. In the seventy years which had intervened since the last peasant rising, villeinage had died naturally away before the progress of social change. The Statutes of Apparel, which from this time encumber the Statute-book, show in their anxiety to curtail the dress of the labourer and the farmer the progress of these classes in comfort and wealth; and from the language of the statutes themselves it is plain

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*Suppres-
sion of the
revolt:*

that as wages rose both farmer and labourer went on clothing themselves better in spite of sumptuary provisions. With the exception of a demand for the repeal of the Statute of Labourers, the programme of the Commons was not social but political. The "Complaint" calls for administrative and economical reforms; it denounces the exclusion of the Duke of York and other nobles from the royal councils; it calls for a change of ministry, a more careful expenditure of the royal revenue, and for the restoration of freedom of election which had been broken in upon by the interference both of the Crown and the great landowners.

The Council refused to receive the "Complaint," and a body of troops under Sir Humphrey Stafford fell on the Kentishmen as they reached Sevenoaks. This attack however was roughly beaten off, and Cade's host turned back to encounter the royal army. But the royal army itself was already calling for justice on the traitors who misled the King; and at the approach of the Kentishmen it broke up in disorder. Its dispersion was followed by Henry's flight to Kenilworth and the entry of the Kentishmen into London, where the execution of Lord Say, the most unpopular of the royal ministers, broke the obstinacy of his colleagues. For three days the peasants entered the city freely, retiring at nightfall to their camp across the river: but on the fifth of July the men of London, goaded by the outrages of the rabble whom their presence roused to plunder, closed the bridge against them, and beat back an attack with great slaughter. The Kentishmen still however lay unbroken in Southwark, while Bishop Waynflete conferred with Cade on behalf of the Council. Their "Complaint" was received, pardons were granted to all who had joined in the rising, and the insurgents dispersed quietly to their homes. Cade had striven in vain to retain them in arms; on their dispersion he formed a new force by throwing open the gaols, and carried off the booty he had won to Rochester. Here however his

men quarrelled over the plunder; his force broke up, and Cade himself was slain by Iden, the Sheriff of Kent, as he fled into Sussex.

Kent remained restless through the year, and a rising in Wiltshire showed the growing and wide-spread trouble of the time. The "Complaint" indeed had only been received to be laid aside. No attempt was made to redress the grievances which it stated or to reform the government. On the contrary the main object of popular hate, the Duke of Somerset, was at once recalled from Normandy to take his place at the head of the royal Council. York, on the other hand, whose recall had been pressed in the "Complaint," was looked upon as an open foe. "Strange language" indeed had long before the Kentish rising been uttered about the Duke. Men had threatened that he "should be fetched with many thousands," and the expectation of his coming to reform the government became so general that orders were given to close the western ports against his landing. If we believe the Duke himself, he was forced to move at last by efforts to indict him as a traitor in Ireland itself. Crossing at Michaelmas to Wales in spite of the efforts to arrest him, he gathered four thousand men on his estates and marched upon London. No serious effort was made to prevent his approach to the King; and Henry found himself helpless to resist his demand of a Parliament and of the admission of new councillors to the royal council-board. Parliament met in November, and a bitter strife between York and Somerset ended in the arrest of the latter. A demand which at once followed shows the importance of his fall. Henry the Sixth still remained childless; and Young, a member for Bristol, proposed in the Commons that the Duke of York should be declared heir to the throne. But the blow was averted by repeated prorogations, and Henry's sympathies were shown by the committal of Young to the Tower, by the release of Somerset, and by his promotion to the captaincy of Calais, the most important military post

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the Beau-
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Failure of
York

under the Crown. The Commons indeed still remained resolute. When they again met in the summer of 1451 they called for the removal of Somerset and his creatures from the King's presence. But Henry evaded the demand; and the dissolution of the Houses announced the royal resolve to govern in defiance of the national will.

The contest between the Houses and the Crown had cost England her last possessions across the Channel. As York marched upon London Charles closed on the fragment of the duchy of Guienne which still remained to the descendants of Eleanor. In a few months all was won. Bourg and Blaye surrendered in the spring of 1451, Bordeaux in the summer; two months later the loss of Bayonne ended the war in the south. Of all the English possessions in France only Calais remained; and in 1452 Calais was threatened with attack. The news of this crowning danger again called York to the front. On the declaration of Henry's will to resist all change in the government the Duke had retired to his castle of Ludlow, arresting the whispers of his enemies with a solemn protest that he was true liegeman to the King. But after events show that he was planning a more decisive course of action than that which had broken down with the dissolution of the Parliament, and the news of the approaching siege gave ground for taking such a course at once. Somerset had been appointed Captain of Calais, and as his incapacity had lost England Normandy, it would cost her—so England believed—her last fortress in France. It was said indeed that the Duke was negotiating with Burgundy for its surrender. In the spring of 1452 therefore York again marched on London, but this time with a large body of ordnance and an army which the arrival of reinforcements under Lord Cobham and the Earl of Devonshire raised to over twenty thousand men. Eluding the host which gathered round the King and Somerset he passed by the capital, whose gates had been closed by Henry's orders, and entering Kent took post at Dartford. His army was soon

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Loss of
Guienne.

fronted by the superior force of the King, but the interposition of the more moderate lords of the Council averted open conflict. Henry promised that Somerset should be put on his trial on the charges advanced by the Duke, and York on this pledge disbanded his men. But the pledge was at once broken. Somerset remained in power. York found himself practically a prisoner, and only won his release by an oath to refrain from further "routs" or assemblies.

Two such decisive failures seemed for the time to have utterly broken Richard's power. Weakened as the crown had been by losses abroad, it was clearly strong enough as yet to hold its own against the chief of the baronage. A general amnesty indeed sheltered York's adherents and enabled the Duke himself to retire safely to Ludlow, but for more than a year his rival Somerset wielded without opposition the power Richard had striven to wrest from him. A favourable turn in the progress of the war gave fresh vigour to the Government. The French forces were abruptly called from their march against Calais to the recovery of the south. The towns of Guienne had opened their gates to Charles on his pledge to respect their franchises, but the need of the French treasury was too great to respect the royal word, and heavy taxation turned the hopes of Gascony to its old masters. On the landing of an English force under Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, a general revolt restored to the English their possessions on the Garonne. Somerset used this break of better fortune to obtain heavy subsidies from Parliament in 1453; but ere the twenty thousand men whose levy was voted could cross the Channel a terrible blow had again ruined the English cause. In a march to relieve Castillon on the Dordogne Shrewsbury suddenly found himself face to face with the whole French army. His men were mown down by its guns, and the Earl himself left dead on the field. His fall was the signal for a general submission. Town after town again threw open its gates to Charles, and Bordeaux capitulated in October.

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The Wars
of the
Roses.
1422-
1461.

Madness
of the
King.

The final loss of Gascony fell upon England at a moment when two events at home changed the whole face of affairs. After eight years of childlessness the King became in October the father of a son. With the birth of this boy the rivalry of York and the Beauforts for the right of succession ceased to be the mainspring of English politics; and the crown seemed again to rise out of the turmoil of warring factions. But with the birth of the son came the madness of the father. Henry the Sixth sank into a state of idiotcy which made his rule impossible, and his ministers were forced to call a great Council of peers to devise means for the government of the realm. York took his seat at this council, and the mood of the nobles was seen in the charges of misgovernment which were at once made against Somerset, and in his committal to the Tower. But Somerset was no longer at the head of the royal party. With the birth of her son the Queen, Margaret of Anjou, came to the front. Her restless despotic temper was quickened to action by the dangers which she saw threatening her boy's heritage of the crown; and the demand to be invested with the full royal power which she made after a vain effort to rouse her husband from his lethargy aimed directly at the exclusion of the Duke of York. The demand however was roughly set aside; the Lords gave permission to York to summon a Parliament as the King's lieutenant; and on the assembly of the Houses in the spring of 1454, as the mental alienation of the King continued, the Lords chose Richard Protector of the Realm. With Somerset in prison little opposition could be made to the Protectorate, and that little was soon put down. But the nation had hardly time to feel the guidance of Richard's steady hand when it was removed. At the opening of 1455 the King recovered his senses, and York's Protectorate came at once to an end.

York's
revolt.

Henry had no sooner grasped power again than he fell back on his old policy. The Queen became his chief adviser.

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of the
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1422-
1461.

The Duke of Somerset was released from the Tower and owned by Henry in formal court as his true and faithful liegeman. York on the other hand was deprived of the government of Calais, and summoned with his friends to a council at Leicester, whose object was to provide for the surety of the King's person. Prominent among these friends were two Earls of the house of Neville. We have seen how great a part the Nevilles played after the accession of the house of Lancaster; it was mainly to their efforts that Henry the Fourth owed the overthrow of the Percies, their rivals in the mastery of the north; and from that moment their wealth and power had been steadily growing. Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, was one of the mightiest barons of the realm; but his power was all but equalled by that of his son, a second Richard, who had won the Earldom of Warwick by his marriage with the heiress of the Beauchamps. The marriage of York to Salisbury's sister, Cecily Neville, had bound both the earls to his cause, and under his Protectorate Salisbury had been created Chancellor. But he was stripped of this office on the Duke's fall; and their summons to the council of Leicester was held by the Nevilles to threaten ruin to themselves as to York. The three nobles at once took arms to secure, as they alleged, safe access to the King's person. Henry at the news of their approach mustered two thousand men, and with Somerset, the Earl of Northumberland, and other nobles in his train, advanced to St. Albans.

On the 23rd of May York and the two Earls encamped without the town, and called on Henry "to deliver such as we will accuse, and they to have like as they have deserved and done." The King's reply was as bold as the demand. "Rather than they shall have any lord here with me at this time," he replied, "I shall this day for their sake and in this quarrel myself live and die." A summons to disperse as traitors left York and his fellow nobles no hope but in an attack. At eventide three assaults were made on the

The
civil war.

CHAP. VI. TOWN. Warwick was the first to break in, and the sound of his trumpets in the streets turned the fight into a rout. Death had answered the prayer which Henry rejected, for the Duke of Somerset with Lord Clifford and the Earl of Northumberland were among the fallen. The King himself fell into the victors' hands. The three lords kneeling before him prayed him to take them for his true liegemen, and then rode by his side in triumph into London, where a parliament was at once summoned which confirmed the acts of the Duke; and on a return of the King's malady again nominated York as Protector. But in the spring of 1456 Henry's recovery again ended the Duke's rule; and for two years the warring parties sullenly watched one another. A temporary reconciliation between them was brought about by the misery of the realm, but an attempt of the Queen to arrest the Nevilles in 1458 caused a fresh outbreak of war. Salisbury defeated Lord Audley in a fight at Bloreheath in Staffordshire, and York with the two Earls raised his standard at Ludlow. But the crown was still stronger than any force of the baronage. The King marched rapidly on the insurgents, and a decisive battle was only averted by the desertion of a part of the Yorkist army and the disbanding of the rest. The Duke himself fled to Ireland, the Earls to Calais, while the Queen, summoning a Parliament at Coventry in November pressed on their attainder. But the check, whatever its cause, had been merely a temporary one. York and Warwick planned a fresh attempt from their secure retreats in Ireland and Calais; and in the midsummer of 1460 the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, with Richard's son Edward, the young Earl of March, again landed in Kent. Backed by a general rising of the county they entered London amidst the acclamations of its citizens. The royal army was defeated in a hard-fought action at Northampton in July. Margaret fled to Scotland, and Henry was left a prisoner in the hands of the Duke of York.

The position of York as heir presumptive to the crown

by his descent from Edmund of Langley had ceased with the birth of a son to Henry the Sixth: but the victory of Northampton no sooner raised him to the supreme control of affairs than he ventured to assert the far more dangerous claims which he had secretly cherished as the representative of Lionel of Clarence, and to their consciousness of which was owing the hostility of Henry and his Queen. Such a claim was in direct opposition to that power of the two Houses whose growth had been the work of the past hundred years. There was no constitutional ground for any limitation of the right of Parliament to set aside an elder branch in favour of a younger, and in the Parliamentary Act which placed the House of Lancaster on the throne the claim of the House of Mortimer had been deliberately set aside. Possession, too, told against the Yorkist pretensions. To modern minds the best reply to Richard's claim lay in the words used at a later time by Henry himself. "My father was King; his father also was King; I myself have worn the crown forty years from my cradle: you have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign, and your fathers have done the like to mine. How then can my right be disputed?" Long and undisturbed possession as well as a distinctly legal title by free vote of Parliament was in favour of the House of Lancaster. But the persecution of the Lollards, the interference with elections, the odium of the war, the shame of the long misgovernment, told fatally against the weak and imbecile King whose reign had been a long battle of contending factions. That the misrule had been serious was shown by the attitude of the commercial class. It was the rising of Kent, the great manufacturing district of the realm, which brought about the victory of Northampton. Throughout the struggle which followed London and the great merchant towns were steady for the House of York. Zeal for the Lancastrian cause was found only in Wales, in northern England, and in the south-western shires. It is absurd to suppose that the shrewd traders of Cheapside were moved by an

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claims the
crown.

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abstract question of hereditary right, or that the wild Welshmen believed themselves to be supporting the right of Parliament to regulate the succession. But it marks the power which Parliament had gained that, directly as his claims ran in the teeth of a succession established by it, the Duke of York felt himself compelled to convene the two Houses in October and to lay his claim before the Lords as a petition of right. Neither oaths nor the numerous Acts which had settled and confirmed the right to the crown in the House of Lancaster could destroy, he pleaded, his hereditary claim. The bulk of the Lords refrained from attendance, and those who were present received the petition with hardly concealed reluctance. They solved the question, as they hoped, by a compromise. They refused to dethrone the King, but they had sworn no fealty to his child, and at Henry's death they agreed to receive the Duke as successor to the crown.

War of
the Roses.

But the open display of York's pretensions at once united the partizans of the royal House in a vigorous resistance; and the deadly struggle which received the name of the Wars of the Roses from the white rose which formed the badge of the House of York and the red rose which was the cognizance of the House of Lancaster began in a gathering of the North round Lord Clifford and of the West round Henry, Duke of Somerset, the son of the Duke who had fallen at St. Albans. York, who hurried in December to meet the first with a far inferior force, was defeated and slain at Wakefield. The passion of civil war broke fiercely out on the field. The Earl of Salisbury who had been taken prisoner was hurried to the block. The head of Duke Richard, crowned in mockery with a diadem of paper, is said to have been impaled on the walls of York. His second son, Lord Rutland, fell crying for mercy on his knees before Clifford. But Clifford's father had been the first to fall in the battle of St. Alban's which opened the struggle. "As your father killed mine," cried the savage Baron,

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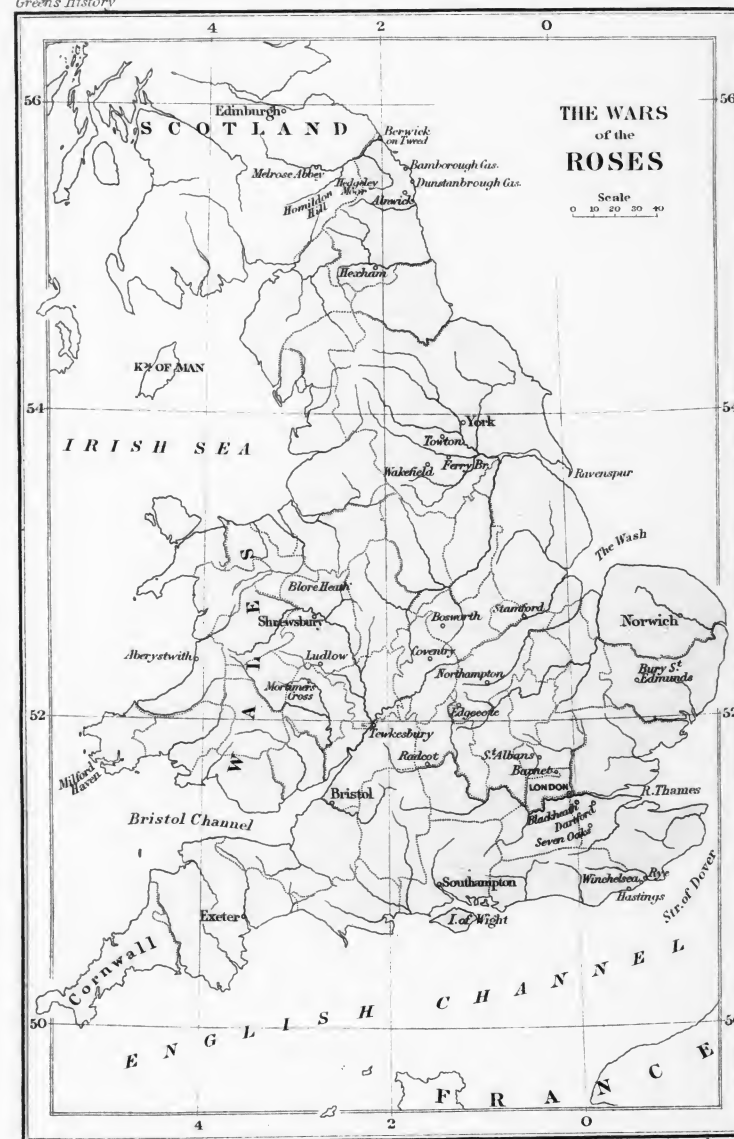
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while he plunged his dagger in the young noble's breast, "I will kill you!" The brutal deed was soon to be avenged. Richard's eldest son, Edward, the Earl of March, was busy gathering a force on the Welsh border in support of his father at the moment when the Duke was defeated and slain. Young as he was Edward showed in this hour of apparent ruin the quickness and vigour of his temper, and routing on his march a body of Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross struck boldly upon London. It was on London that the Lancastrian army had moved after its victory at Wakefield. A desperate struggle took place at St. Albans where a force of Kentish men with the Earl of Warwick strove to bar its march on the capital, but Warwick's force broke under cover of night and an immediate advance of the conquerors might have decided the contest. Margaret however paused to sully her victory by a series of bloody executions, and the rough northerners who formed the bulk of her army scattered to pillage while Edward, hurrying from the west, appeared before the capital. The citizens rallied at his call, and cries of "Long live King Edward" rang round the handsome young leader as he rode through the streets. A council of Yorkist lords, hastily summoned, resolved that the compromise agreed on in Parliament was at an end and that Henry of Lancaster had forfeited the throne. The final issue however now lay not with Parliament, but with the sword. Disappointed of London, the Lancastrian army fell rapidly back on the North, and Edward hurried as rapidly in pursuit. On the 29th of March, 1461, the two armies encountered one another at Towton Field, near Tadcaster. In the numbers engaged, as well as in the terrible obstinacy of the struggle, no such battle had been seen in England since the fight of Senlac. The two armies together numbered nearly 120,000 men. The day had just broken when the Yorkists advanced through a thick snowfall, and for six hours the battle raged with desperate bravery on either side. At one critical moment Warwick saw his

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men falter, and stabbing his horse before them, swore on the cross of his sword to win or die on the field. The battle was turned at last by the arrival of the Duke of Norfolk with a fresh force from the Eastern Counties, and at noon the Lancastrians gave way. A river in their rear turned the retreat into a rout, and the flight and carnage, for no quarter was given on either side, went on through the night and the morrow. Edward's herald counted more than 20,000 Lancastrian corpses on the field. The losses of the conquerors were hardly less heavy than those of the conquered. But their triumph was complete. The Earl of Northumberland was slain; the Earls of Devonshire and Wiltshire were taken and beheaded; the Duke of Somerset fled into exile. Henry himself with his Queen was forced to fly over the border and to find a refuge in Scotland. The cause of the House of Lancaster was lost; and with the victory of Towton the crown of England passed to Edward of York.

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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

VOL II



HISTORY
OF
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BY
JOHN RICHARD GREEN, M.A.,
HONORARY FELLOW OF JESUS' COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOLUME II.

The Monarchy. 1461-1540
The Reformation. 1540-1603.

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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BOOK V.

THE MONARCHY.

1461-1540.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK V.

1461—1540.

Edward the Fifth is the subject of a work attributed to Sir Thomas More, and which almost certainly derives much of its importance from Archbishop Morton. Whatever its historical worth may be, it is remarkable in its English form as the first historical work of any literary value which we possess written in our modern prose. The "Letters and Papers of Richard the Third and Henry the Seventh," some "Memorials of Henry the Seventh," including his life by Bernard André of Toulouse, and a volume of "Materials" for a history of his reign have been edited for the Rolls Series. A biography of Henry is among the works of Lord Bacon. The history of Erasmus in England must be followed in his own interesting letters; the most accessible edition of the typical book of the revival, the "Utopia," is the Elizabethan translation, published by Mr. Arber. Mr. Lupton has done much to increase our scanty knowledge of Colet by his recent editions of several of his works. Halle's Chronicle extends from the reign of Edward the Fourth to that of Henry the Eighth; for the latter he is copied by Grafton and followed by Holinshed. Cavendish has given a faithful and touching account of Wolsey in his later days, but for any real knowledge of his administration or the foreign policy of Henry the Eighth we must turn from these to the invaluable Calendars of State Papers for this period from the English, Spanish, and Austrian archives, with the prefaces of Professor Brewer and Mr. Bergenroth. Cromwell's early life as told by Foxe is a mass of fable, and the State Papers afford the only real information as to his ministry. For Sir Thomas More we have a touching life by his son-in-law, Roper. The more important documents for the religious history of the time will be found in Mr. Pocock's edition of Burnet's "History of the Reformation;" those relating to the dissolution of the monasteries in the collection of letters on that subject published by the Camden Society, and in the "Original Letters" of Sir Henry Ellis. A mass of materials of very various value has been accumulated by Strype in his collections, which commence at this period.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE OF YORK

1461—1485.

WITH the victory of Towton the war of the succession came practically to an end. Though Margaret still struggled on the northern border and the treachery of Warwick for a while drove the new king from his realm, this gleam of returning fortune only brought a more fatal ruin on the House of Lancaster and seated the House of York more firmly on the throne. But the Wars of the Roses did far more than ruin one royal house or set up another. They found England, in the words of Commynes, "among all the world's lordships of which I have knowledge, that where the public weal is best ordered, and where least violence reigns over the people." An English King—the shrewd observer noticed—"can undertake no enterprize of account without assembling his Parliament, which is a thing most wise and holy, and therefore are these kings stronger and better served" than the despotic sovereigns of the Continent. The English kingship, as a judge, Sir John Fortescue, could boast when writing at this time, was not an absolute but a limited monarchy; the land was not a land where the will of the prince was itself the law, but where the prince could neither make laws nor impose taxes save by his subjects' consent. At no time had Parliament played so constant and prominent a part in the government of the realm. At no time had the *English freedom.*

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1485.

Results of
Wars of
Roses.

principles of constitutional liberty seemed so thoroughly understood and so dear to the people at large. The long Parliamentary contest between the Crown and the two Houses since the days of Edward the First had firmly established the great securities of national liberty—the right of freedom from arbitrary taxation, from arbitrary legislation, from arbitrary imprisonment, and the responsibility of even the highest servants of the Crown to Parliament and to the law.

But with the close of the struggle for the succession this liberty wholly disappeared. If the Wars of the Roses failed in utterly destroying English freedom, they succeeded in arresting its progress for more than a hundred years. With them we enter on an epoch of constitutional retrogression in which the slow work of the age that went before it was rapidly undone. From the accession of Edward the Fourth Parliamentary life was almost suspended, or was turned into a mere form by the overpowering influence of the Crown. The legislative powers of the two Houses were usurped by the royal Council. Arbitrary taxation reappeared in benevolences and forced loans. Personal liberty was almost extinguished by a formidable spy-system and by the constant practice of arbitrary imprisonment. Justice was degraded by the prodigal use of bills of attainder, by a wide extension of the judicial power of the royal Council, by the servility of judges, by the coercion of juries. So vast and sweeping was the change that to careless observers of a later day the constitutional monarchy of the Edwards and the Henries seemed suddenly to have transformed itself under the Tudors into a despotism as complete as the despotism of the Turk. Such a view is no doubt exaggerated and unjust. Bend and strain the law as he might, there never was a time when the most wilful of English rulers failed to own the restraints of law; and the obedience of the most servile among English subjects lay within bounds, at once political and religious, which no theory of King-

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New
strength
of the
Crown.

worship could bring them to overpass. But even if we make these reserves, the character of the monarchy from the days of Edward the Fourth to the days of Elizabeth remains something strange and isolated in our history. It is hard to connect the kingship of the old English, the Norman, the Angevin, or the Plantagenet kings with the kingship of the House of York or of the House of Tudor.

The primary cause of this great change lay in the recovery of its older strength by the Crown. Through the last hundred and fifty years the monarchy had been hampered by the pressure of the war. Through the last fifty it had been weakened by the insecurity of a disputed succession. It was to obtain supplies for the strife with Scotland and the strife with France that the earlier Plantagenets had been forced to yield to the ever-growing claims which were advanced by the Parliament. It was to win the consent of Parliament to its occupation of the throne and its support against every rival that the House of Lancaster bent yet more humbly to its demands. But with the loss of Guienne the war with France came virtually to an end. The war with Scotland died down into a series of border forays. The Wars of the Roses settled the question of the succession, first by the seeming extinction of the House of Lancaster, and then by the utter ruin of the House of York. The royal treasury was not only relieved from the drain which had left the crown at the mercy of the Third Estate; it was filled as it had never been filled before by the forfeitures and confiscations of the civil war. In the one bill of attainder which followed Towton twelve great nobles and more than a hundred knights and squires were stripped of their estates to the king's profit. Nearly a fifth of the land is said to have passed into the royal possession at one period or other of the civil strife. Edward the Fourth and Henry the Seventh not only possessed a power untrammelled by the difficulties which had beset the Crown since the days of Edward the First, but they

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were masters of a wealth such as the Crown had never known since the days of Henry the Second. Throughout their reigns these kings showed a firm resolve to shun the two rocks on which the monarchy had been so nearly wrecked. No policy was too inglorious that enabled them to avoid the need of war. The inheritance of a warlike policy, the consciousness of great military abilities, the cry of his own people for a renewal of the struggle, failed to lure Edward from his system of peace. Henry clung to peace in spite of the threatening growth of the French monarchy: he refused to be drawn into any serious war even by its acquisition of Brittany and of a coast-line that ran unbroken along the Channel. Nor was any expedient too degrading if it swelled the royal hoard. Edward by a single stroke, the grant of the customs to the king for life, secured a source of revenue which went far to relieve the Crown from its dependence on Parliament. He stooped to add to the gold which his confiscations amassed by trading on a vast scale; his ships, freighted with tin, wool, and cloth, made the name of the merchant-king famous in the ports of Italy and Greece. Henry was as adroit and as shameless a financier as his predecessor. He was his own treasurer, he kept his own accounts, he ticked off with his own hand the compositions he levied on the western shires for their abortive revolts.

*Suspension of
Parliamentary
life.*

With peace and a full treasury the need for calling Parliament together was removed. The collapse of the Houses was in itself a revolution. Up to this moment they had played a more and more prominent part in the government of the realm. The progress made under the earlier Plantagenets had gone as steadily on under Henry the Fourth and his successors. The Commons had continued their advance. Not only had the right of self-taxation and of the initiation of laws been explicitly yielded to them, but they had interfered with the administration of the state, had directed the application of subsidies, and called royal ministers to account by repeated

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instances of impeachment. Under the first two kings of the House of Lancaster Parliament had been summoned almost every year. Under Henry the Sixth an important step was made in constitutional progress by abandoning the old custom of presenting the requests of Parliament in the form of petitions which were subsequently moulded into statutes by the royal Council. The statute itself in its final shape was now presented for the royal assent and the Crown deprived of all opportunity of modifying it. But with the reign of Edward the Fourth not only this progress but the very action of Parliament comes almost to an end. For the first time since the days of John not a single law which promoted freedom or remedied the abuses of power was even proposed. The Houses indeed were only rarely called together by Edward; they were only twice summoned during the last thirteen years of Henry the Seventh. But this discontinuance of Parliamentary life was not due merely to the new financial system of the crown. The policy of the kings was aided by the internal weakness of Parliament itself. No institution suffered more from the civil war. The Houses became mere gatherings of nobles with their retainers and partizans. They were like armed camps to which the great lords came with small armies at their backs. When arms were prohibited the retainers of the warring barons appeared, as in the Club Parliament of 1426, with clubs on their shoulders. When clubs were forbidden they hid stones and balls of lead in their clothes. Amidst scenes such as these the faith in and reverence for Parliaments could hardly fail to die away. But the very success of the House of York was a more fatal blow to the trust in them. It was by the act of the Houses that the Lancastrian line had been raised to the throne. Its title was a Parliamentary title. Its existence was in fact a contention that the will of Parliament could override the claims of blood in the succession to the throne. With all this the civil war dealt roughly and decisively. The Parliamentary line was driven from

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1485.

Ruin of
Feudal
Organiza-
tion.

the throne. The Parliamentary title was set aside as usurpation. The House of York based its claim to the throne on the incapacity of Parliament to set aside pretensions which were based on sheer nearness of blood. The fall of the House of Lancaster, the accession of the Yorkist Kings, must have seemed to the men who had witnessed the struggle a crushing defeat of the Parliament.

Weakened by failure, discredited by faction, no longer needful as a source of supplies, it was easy for the Monarchy to rid itself of the check of the two Houses, and their riddance at once restored the crown to the power it had held under the earlier Kings. But in actual fact Edward the Fourth found himself the possessor of a far greater authority than this. The structure of feudal society fronted a feudal King with two great rival powers in the Baronage and the Church. Even in England, though feudalism had far less hold than elsewhere, the noble and the priest formed effective checks on the monarchy. But at the close of the Wars of the Roses these older checks no longer served as restraints upon the action of the Crown. With the growth of Parliament the weight of the Baronage as a separate constitutional element in the realm, even the separate influence of the Church, had fallen more and more into decay. For their irregular and individual action was gradually substituted the legal and continuous action of the three Estates; and now that the assembly of the estates practically ceased it was too late to revive the older checks which in earlier days had fettered the action of the crown. The kingship of Edward and his successors therefore was not a mere restoration of the kingship of John or of Henry the Second. It was the kingship of those Kings apart from the constitutional forces which in their case stood side by side with kingship, controlling and regulating its action, apart from the force of custom, from the strong arm of the baron, from the religious sanctions which formed so effective a weapon in the hands of the priest, in a word apart from that social organiza-

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Weakness
of the
Church.

tion from which our political constitution had sprung. Nor was the growth of Parliament the only cause for the weakness of these feudal restraints. The older social order which had prevailed throughout Western Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire was now passing away. The speculation of the twelfth century, the scholastic criticism of the thirteenth, the Lollardry and socialism of the fourteenth century, had at last done their work. The spell of the past, the spell of custom and tradition, which had enchained the minds of men was roughly broken. The supremacy of the warrior in a world of war, the severance of privileged from unprivileged classes, no longer seemed the one natural structure of society. The belief in its possession of supernatural truths and supernatural powers no longer held man in unquestioning awe of the priesthood. The strength of the Church was sapped alike by theological and moral revolt, while the growth of new classes, the new greed of peace and of the wealth that comes of peace, the advance of industry, the division of property, the progress of centralized government, dealt fatal blows at the feudal organization of the state.

Nor was the danger merely an external one. Noble and priest alike were beginning to disbelieve in themselves. The new knowledge which was now dawning on the world, the new direct contact with the Greek and Roman literatures which was just beginning to exert its influence on western Europe, told above all on these wealthier and more refined classes. The young scholar or noble who crossed the Alps brought from the schools of Florence the dim impression of a republican liberty or an imperial order which disenchanted him of the world in which he found himself. He looked on the feudalism about him as a brutal anarchy, he looked on the Church itself as the supplanter of a nobler and more philosophic morality. In England as elsewhere the great ecclesiastical body still seemed imposing from the memories of its past, its immense wealth, its tradition of statesmanship, its long

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association with the intellectual and religious aspirations of men, its hold on social life. But its real power was small. Its moral inertness, its lack of spiritual enthusiasm, gave it less and less hold on the religious minds of the day. Its energies indeed seemed absorbed in a mere clinging to existence. For in spite of steady repression Lollardry still lived on, no longer indeed as an organized movement, but in scattered and secret groups whose sole bond was a common loyalty to the Bible and a common spirit of revolt against the religion of their day. Nine years after the accession of Henry the Sixth the Duke of Gloucester was traversing England with men-at-arms for the purpose of repressing the risings of the Lollards and of hindering the circulation of their invectives against the clergy. In 1449 "Bible men" were still sufficiently formidable to call a prelate to the front as a controversialist: and the very title of Bishop Pecock's work, "A Repressor of overmuch blaming of the clergy," shows the damage done by their virulent criticism. Its most fatal effect was to rob the priesthood of moral power. Taunted with a love of wealth, with a lower standard of life than that of the ploughman and weaver who gathered to read the Bible by night, dreading in themselves any burst of emotion or enthusiasm as a possible prelude to heresy, the clergy ceased to be the moral leaders of the nation. They plunged as deeply as the men about them into the darkest superstition, and above all into the belief in sorcery and magic which formed so remarkable a feature of the time. It was for conspiracy with a priest to waste the King's life by sorcery that Eleanor Cobham did penance through the streets of London. The mist which wrapped the battle-field of Barnet was attributed to the incantations of Friar Bungay. The one pure figure which rises out of the greed, the selfishness, the scepticism of the time, the figure of Joan of Arc, was looked on by the doctors and priests who judged her as that of a sorceress. The prevalence of such beliefs tells its own tale of the intellectual state

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of the clergy. They were ceasing in fact to be an intellectual class at all. The monasteries were no longer seats of learning. "I find in them," says Poggio, an Italian scholar who visited England some twenty years after Chaucer's death, "men given up to sensuality in abundance but very few lovers of learning and those of a barbarous sort, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature." The statement is no doubt coloured by the contempt of the new scholars for the scholastic philosophy which had taken the place of letters in England as elsewhere, but even scholasticism was now at its lowest ebb. The erection of colleges, which began in the thirteenth century but made little progress till the time we have reached, failed to arrest the quick decline of the universities both in the numbers and learning of their students. Those at Oxford amounted to only a fifth of the scholars who had attended its lectures a century before, and Oxford Latin became proverbial for a jargon in which the very tradition of grammar had been lost. Literature, which had till now rested mainly in the hands of the clergy, came almost to an end. Of all its nobler forms history alone lingered on; but it lingered in compilations or extracts from past writers, such as make up the so-called works of Walsingham, in jejune monastic annals, or worthless popular compendiums. The only real trace of mental activity was seen in the numerous treatises which dealt with alchemy or magic, the elixir of life, or the philosopher's stone; a fungous growth which even more clearly than the absence of healthier letters witnessed to the progress of intellectual decay.

Somewhat of their old independence lingered indeed among the lower clergy and the monastic orders; it was in fact the successful resistance of the last to an effort made to establish arbitrary taxation which brought about their ruin. Up to the terrible statutes of Thomas Cromwell the clergy in convocation still asserted boldly their older rights against the Crown. But it was through its

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Baronage.*

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prelates that the Church exercised a directly political influence, and these showed a different temper from the clergy. Driven by sheer need, by the attack of the barons on their temporal possessions and of the Lollard on their spiritual authority, into dependence on the Crown, their weight was thrown into the scale of the monarchy. Their weakness told directly on the constitutional progress of the realm, for through the diminution in the number of the peers temporal the greater part of the House of Lords was now composed of spiritual peers, of bishops and the greater abbots. The statement which attributes this lessening of the baronage to the Wars of the Roses seems indeed to be an error. Although Henry the Seventh, in dread of opposition to his throne, summoned only a portion of the temporal peers to his first Parliament there were as many barons at his accession as at the accession of Henry the Sixth. Of the greater houses only those of Beaufort and Tiptoft were extinguished by the civil war. The decline of the baronage, the extinction of the greater families, the break up of the great estates, had in fact been going on throughout the reign of the Edwards; and it was after Agincourt that the number of temporal peers sank to its lowest ebb. From that time till the time of the Tudors they numbered but fifty-two. A reduction in the numbers of the baronage however might have been more than compensated by the concentration of great estates in the hands of the houses that survived. What wrecked it as a military force was the revolution which was taking place in the art of war. The introduction of gunpowder ruined feudalism. The mounted and heavily armed knight gave way to the meaner footman. Fortresses which had been impregnable against the attacks of the Middle Ages crumbled before the new artillery. Although gunpowder had been in use as early as Crecy it was not till the accession of the House of Lancaster that it was really brought into effective employment as a military resource. But the revolution in warfare was immediate. The wars of Henry the Fifth

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were wars of sieges. The "Last of the Barons," as Warwick has picturesquely been styled, relied mainly on his train of artillery. It was artillery that turned the day at Barnet and Tewkesbury, and that gave Henry the Seventh his victory over the formidable dangers which assailed him. The strength which the change gave to the crown was in fact almost irresistible. Throughout the Middle Ages the call of a great baron had been enough to raise a formidable revolt. Yeomen and retainers took down the bow from their chimney corner, knights buckled on their armour, and in a few days a host threatened the throne. Without artillery however such a force was now helpless, and the one train of artillery in the kingdom lay at the disposal of the King.

But a far greater strength than guns could give was given to the monarchy by its maintenance of order and by its policy of peace. For two hundred years England had been almost constantly at war, and to war without had been added discord and mis-rule within. As the country tasted the sweets of rest and firm government that reaction of feeling, that horror of fresh civil wars, that content with its own internal growth and indifference to foreign aggrandizement, which distinguished the epoch of the Tudors began to assert its power. The crown became identified with the thought of national prosperity, almost with the thought of national existence. Loyalty drew to itself the force of patriotism. Devotion to the crown became one in men's minds with devotion to their country. For almost a hundred years England lost all sense of a national individuality; it saw itself only in the Crown. The tendency became irresistible as the nation owned in the power of its Kings its one security for social order, its one bulwark against feudal outrage and popular anarchy. The violence and anarchy which had always clung like a taint to the baronage grew more and more unbearable as the nation moved forward to a more settled peacefulness and industry. But this tendency

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to violence received a new impulse from the war with France. Long before the struggle was over it had done its fatal work on the mood of the English noble. His aim had become little more than a lust for gold, a longing after plunder, after the pillage of farms, the sack of cities, the ransom of captives. So intense was the greed of gain that in the later years of the war only a threat of death could keep the fighting-men in their ranks, and the results of victory after victory were lost through the anxiety of the conquerors to deposit their booty and captives safely at home. The moment the hand of such leaders as Henry the Fifth or Bedford was removed the war died down into mere massacre and brigandage. "If God had been a captain now-a-days," exclaimed a French general, "he would have turned marauder." The temper thus nursed on the fields of France found at last scope for action in England itself. Even before the outbreak of the War of the Roses the nobles had become as lawless and dissolute at home as they were greedy and cruel abroad.

Grant of
Liveries.

But with the struggle of York and Lancaster and the paralysis of government which it brought with it, all hold over the baronage was gone; and the lawlessness and brutality of their temper showed itself without a check. The disorder which their violence wrought in a single district of the country is brought home by the Paston Letters, an invaluable series of domestic correspondence which lifts for us a corner of the veil that hides the social state of England in the fifteenth century. We see houses sacked, judges overawed or driven from the bench, peaceful men hewn down by assassins or plundered by armed bands, women carried off to forced marriages, elections controlled by brute force, parliaments degraded into camps of armed retainers. As the number of their actual vassals declined with the progress of enfranchisement and the upgrowth of the freeholder, the nobles had found a substitute for them in the grant of their "liveries," the badges of their households, to the smaller

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gentry and farmers of their neighbourhood, and this artificial revival of the dying feudalism became one of the curses of the day. The outlaw, the broken soldier returning penniless from the wars, found shelter and wages in the train of the greater barons, and furnished them with a force ready at any moment for violence or civil strife. The same motives which brought the freeman of the tenth century to commend himself to thegn or baron forced the yeoman or smaller gentleman of the fifteenth to don the cognizance of his powerful neighbour, and to ask for a grant of "livery" which would secure him aid and patronage in fray or suit. For to meddle with such a retainer was perilous even for sheriff or judge; and the force which a noble could summon at his call sufficed to overawe a law-court or to drag a culprit from prison or dock. The evils of this system of "maintenance," as it was called, had been felt long before the Wars of the Roses; and statutes both of Edward the First and of Richard the Second had been aimed against it. But it was in the civil war that it showed itself in its full force. The weakness of the crown and the strife of political factions for supremacy left the nobles masters of the field; and the white rose of the House of York, the red rose of the House of Lancaster, the portcullis of the Beauforts, the pied bull of the Nevilles, the bear and ragged staff which Warwick borrowed from the Beauchamps, were seen on hundreds of breasts in Parliament or on the battle-field.

The lawlessness of the baronage tended as it had always tended to the profit of the crown by driving the people at large to seek for order and protection at the hands of the monarchy. And at this moment the craving for such a protection was strengthened by the general growth of wealth and industry. The smaller proprietors of the counties were growing fast both in wealth and numbers, while the burgess class in the cities were drawing fresh riches from the development of trade which characterized this period. The noble himself owed his

The
Social
Revolution.

CHAP. I. importance to his wealth. Poggio, as he wandered through the island, noted that "the noble who has the greatest revenue is most respected; and that even men of gentle blood attend to country business and sell their wool and cattle, not thinking it any disparagement to engage in rural industry." Slowly but surely the foreign commerce of the country, hitherto conducted by the Italian, the Hanse merchant, or the trader of Catalonia or southern Gaul, was passing into English hands. English merchants were settled at Florence and at Venice. English merchant ships appeared in the Baltic. The first faint upgrowth of manufactures was seen in a crowd of protective statutes which formed a marked feature in the legislation of Edward the Fourth. The weight which the industrial classes had acquired was seen in the bounds which their opinion set to the Wars of the Roses. England presented to Philippe de Commynes the rare spectacle of a land where, brutal as was its civil strife, "there are no buildings destroyed or demolished by war, and where the mischief of it falls on those who make the war." The ruin and bloodshed were limited in fact to the great lords and their feudal retainers. If the towns once or twice threw themselves, as at Towton, into the struggle, the trading and agricultural classes for the most part stood wholly apart from it. While the baronage was dashing itself to pieces in battle after battle justice went on undisturbed. The law courts sate at Westminster. The judges rode on circuit as of old. The system of jury trial took more and more its modern form by the separation of the jurors from the witnesses. But beneath this outer order and prosperity a social revolution was beginning which tended as strongly as the outrages of the baronage to the profit of the crown. The rise in the price of wool was giving a fresh impulse to the changes in agriculture which had begun with the Black Death and were to go steadily on for a hundred years to come. These changes were the throwing together of the smaller holdings, and

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the introduction of sheep-farming on an enormous scale. The new wealth of the merchant classes helped on the change. They began to invest largely in land, and these "farming gentlemen and clerking knights," as Latimer bitterly styled them, were restrained by few traditions or associations in their eviction of the smaller tenants. The land indeed had been greatly underlet, and as its value rose with the peace and firm government of the early Tudors the temptation to raise the customary rents became irresistible. "That which went heretofore for twenty or forty pounds a year," we learn in Henry the Eighth's day, "now is let for fifty or a hundred." But it had been only by this low scale of rent that the small yeomanry class had been enabled to exist. "My father," says Latimer, "was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own; only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled so much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had walk for a hundred sheep, and my mother milked thirty kine; he was able and did find the King a harness with himself and his horse while he came to the place that he should receive the King's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went to Blackheath Field. He kept me to school: he married my sisters with five pounds apiece, so that he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor, and all this he did of the same farm, where he that now hath it payeth sixteen pounds by year or more, and is not able to do anything for his prince, for himself, nor for his children, or give a cup of drink to the poor."

Increase of rent ended with such tenants in the relinquishment of their holdings, but the bitterness of the ejections which the new system of cultivation necessitated was increased by the iniquitous means that were often employed to bring them about. The farmers, if we believe More in 1515, were "got rid of either by fraud or force, or tired out with repeated wrongs into parting with their

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*Evictions
and En-
closures.*

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property." "In this way it comes to pass that these poor wretches, men, women, husbands, orphans, widows, parents with little children, households greater in number than in wealth (for arable farming requires many hands, while one shepherd and herdsman will suffice for a pasture farm), all these emigrate from their native fields without knowing where to go." The sale of their scanty household stuff drove them to wander homeless abroad, to be thrown into prison as vagabonds, to beg and to steal. Yet in the face of such a spectacle as this we still find the old complaint of scarcity of labour, and the old legal remedy for it in a fixed scale of wages. The social disorder, in fact, baffled the sagacity of English statesmen, and they could find no better remedy for it than laws against the further extension of sheep-farms, and a formidable increase of public executions. Both were alike fruitless. Enclosures and evictions went on as before and swelled the numbers and the turbulence of the floating labour class. The riots against "enclosures," of which we first hear in the time of Henry the Sixth and which became a constant feature of the Tudor period, are indications not only of a perpetual strife going on in every quarter between the landowners and the smaller peasant class, but of a mass of social discontent which was to seek constant outlets in violence and revolution. And into this mass of disorder the break-up of the military households and the return of wounded and disabled soldiers from the wars introduced a dangerous leaven of outrage and crime. England for the first time saw a distinct criminal class in the organized gangs of robbers which began to infest the roads and were always ready to gather round the standard of revolt. The gallows did their work in vain. "If you do not remedy the evils which produce thieves," More urged with bitter truth, "the rigorous execution of justice in punishing thieves will be vain." But even More could only suggest a remedy which, efficacious as it was subsequently to prove, had yet to wait a century for its realization. "Let the woollen manufacture be intro-

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duced, so that honest employment may be found for those whom want has made thieves or will make thieves ere long." The extension of industry at last succeeded in absorbing this mass of surplus labour, but the process was not complete till the close of Elizabeth's day, and throughout the time of the Tudors the discontent of the labour class bound the wealthier classes to the crown. It was in truth this social danger which lay at the root of the Tudor despotism. For the proprietary classes the repression of the poor was a question of life and death. Employer and proprietor were ready to surrender freedom into the hands of the one power which could preserve them from social anarchy. It was to the selfish panic of the landowners that England owed the Statute of Labourers and its terrible heritage of pauperism. It was to the selfish panic of both landowner and merchant that she owed the despotism of the Monarchy.

The most fatal effect of this panic, of this passion for "order," was seen in the striving of these classes after special privileges which the crown alone could bestow. Even before the outbreak of the civil war this tendency towards privilege had produced important constitutional results. The character of the House of Commons had been changed by the restriction of both the borough and the county franchise. Up to this time all freemen settling in a borough and paying their dues to it became by the mere fact of settlement its burgesses. But during the reign of Henry the Sixth and still more under Edward the Fourth this largeness of borough life was roughly curtailed. The trade companies which vindicated civic freedom from the tyranny of the older merchant guilds themselves tended to become a narrow and exclusive oligarchy. Most of the boroughs had by this time acquired civic property, and it was with the aim of securing their own enjoyment of this against any share of it by "strangers" that the existing burgesses for the most part procured charters of incorporation from the Crown,

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which turned them into a close body and excluded from their number all who were not burgesses by birth or who failed henceforth to purchase their right of entrance by a long apprenticeship. In addition to this narrowing of the burgess-body the internal government of the boroughs had almost universally passed since the failure of the Communal movement in the thirteenth century from the free gathering of the citizens in borough-mote into the hands of Common Councils, either self-elected or elected by the wealthier burgesses; and to these councils, or to a yet more restricted number of "select men" belonging to them, clauses in the new charters generally confined the right of choosing their representatives in Parliament. It was with this restriction that the long process of degradation began which ended in reducing the representation of our boroughs to a mere mockery. Influences which would have had small weight over the town at large proved irresistible by the small body of corporators or "select men." Great nobles, neighbouring landowners, the Crown itself, seized on the boroughs as their prey, and dictated the choice of their representatives. Corruption did whatever force failed to do: and from the Wars of the Roses to the days of Pitt the voice of the people had to be looked for not in the members for the towns but in the knights for the counties.

Restric-
tion of
County
Franchise.

The restriction of the county franchise on the other hand was the direct work of the Parliament itself. Economic changes were fast widening the franchise in the shires. The number of freeholders increased with the subdivision of estates and the social changes which we have already noticed. But this increase of independence was marked by "riots and divisions between the gentlemen and other people" which the statesmen of the day attributed to the excessive number of voters. In many counties the power of the great lords undoubtedly enabled them to control elections through the number of their retainers. In Cade's revolt the Kentishmen

complained that "the people of the shire are not allowed to have their free elections in the choosing of knights for the shire, but letters have been sent from divers estates to the great nobles of the county, the which enforceth their tenants and other people by force to choose other persons than the common will is." It was primarily to check this abuse that a statute of the reign of Henry the Sixth restricted in 1430 the right of voting in shires to freeholders holding land worth forty shillings, a sum equal in our money to at least twenty pounds a year and representing a far higher proportional income at the present time. Whatever its original purpose may have been, the result of the statute was a wide disfranchisement. It was aimed, in its own words, against voters "of no value, whereof every of them pretended to have a voice equivalent with the more worthy knights and esquires dwelling in the same counties." But in actual working the statute was interpreted in a more destructive fashion than its words were intended to convey. Up to this time all suitors who attended at the Sheriff's Court had voted without question for the Knight of the Shire, but by the new statute the great bulk of the existing voters, every leaseholder and every copyholder, found themselves implicitly deprived of their franchise.

The restriction of the suffrage was the main cause that broke the growing strength of the House of Commons. The ruin of the baronage, the weakness of the prelacy, broke that of the House of Lords. The power of the Parliament died down therefore at the very moment when the cessation of war, the opening of new sources of revenue, the cry for protection against social anarchy, doubled the strength of the Crown. A change passed over the spirit of English government which was little short of a revolution. The change however was a slow and gradual one. It is with the victory of Towton that the new power of the Monarchy begins, but in the years that immediately followed this victory there was little

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Warwick. Warwick's services were munificently rewarded by a grant of vast estates from the confiscated lands of the Lancastrian baronage, and by his elevation to the highest posts in the service of the State. He was Captain of

Calais, admiral of the fleet in the Channel, and Warden of the Western Marches. The command of the northern border lay in the hands of his brother, Lord Montagu, who received as his share of the spoil the forfeited Earldom of Northumberland and the estates of his hereditary rivals, the Percies. A younger brother, George Neville, was raised to the See of York and the post of Lord Chancellor. Lesser rewards fell to Warwick's uncles, the minor chiefs of the House of Neville, Lords Falconberg, Abergavenny, and Latimer. The vast power which such an accumulation of wealth and honours placed at the Earl's disposal was wielded with consummate ability. In outer seeming Warwick was the very type of the feudal baron. He could raise armies at his call from his own earldoms. Six hundred liveried retainers followed him to Parliament. Thousands of dependants feasted in his court-yard. But few men were really further from the feudal ideal. Active and ruthless warrior as he was, his enemies denied to the Earl the gift of personal daring. In war he showed himself more general than soldier, and in spite of a series of victories his genius was not so much military as diplomatic. A Burgundian chronicler who knew him well describes him as the craftiest man of his day, "le plus subtil homme de son vivant." Secret, patient, without faith or loyalty, ruthless, unscrupulous, what Warwick excelled in was intrigue, treachery, the contrivance of plots, and sudden desertions.

His temper brought out in terrible relief the moral disorganization of the time. The old order of the world was passing away. Since the fall of the Roman Empire civil society had been held together by the power of the given word, by the "fealty" and "loyalty" that bound vassal to lord and lord to king. A common faith in its possession of supernatural truths and supernatural powers had bound men together in the religious society which knew itself as the Church. But the spell of religious belief was now broken and the feudal conception

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of society was passing away. On the other hand the individual sense of personal duty, the political consciousness of each citizen that national order and national welfare are essential to his own well-being, had not yet come. The bonds which had held the world together through so many ages loosened and broke only to leave man face to face with his own selfishness. The motives that sway and ennoble the common conduct of men were powerless over the ruling classes. Pope and king, bishop and noble, vied with each other in greed, in self-seeking, in lust, in faithlessness, in a pitiless cruelty. It is this moral degradation that flings so dark a shade over the Wars of the Roses. From no period in our annals do we turn with such weariness and disgust. Their savage battles, their ruthless executions, their shameless treasons, seem all the more terrible from the pure selfishness of the ends for which men fought, for the utter want of all nobleness and chivalry in the contest itself, of all great result in its close. And it is this moral disorganization that expresses itself in the men whom the civil war left behind it. Of honour, of loyalty, of good faith, Warwick knew nothing. He had fought for the House of Neville rather than for the House of York, had set Edward on the throne as a puppet whom he could rule at his will, and his policy seemed to have gained its end in leaving the Earl master of the realm.

Edward
the
Fourth.

In the three years which followed Towton the power of the Nevilles overshadowed that of the King. It was Warwick who crushed a new rising which Margaret brought about by a landing in the north, and who drove the queen and her child over the Scotch border. It was his brother, Lord Montagu, who suppressed a new revolt in 1464. The defeat of this rising in the battle of Hexham seemed to bring the miserable war to a close, for after some help-
less wanderings Henry the Sixth was betrayed into the hands of his enemies and brought in triumph to London. His feet were tied to the stirrups, he was led thrice round the pillory, and then sent as a prisoner to the Tower.

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Warwick was now all-powerful in the state, but the cessation of the war was the signal for a silent strife between the Earl and his young sovereign. In Edward indeed Warwick was to meet not only a consummate general but a politician whose subtlety and rapidity of conception were far above his own. As a mere boy Edward had shown himself among the ablest and the most pitiless of the warriors of the civil war. He had looked on with cool ruthlessness while grey-haired nobles were hurried to the block. The terrible bloodshed of Towton woke no pity in his heart; he turned from it only to frame a vast bill of attainder which drove twelve great nobles and a hundred knights to beggary and exile. When treachery placed his harmless rival in his power he visited him with cruel insult. His military ability had been displayed in his rapid march upon London, the fierce blow which freed him from his enemy in the rear, the decisive victory at Towton. But his political ability was slower in developing itself. In his earliest years he showed little taste for the work of rule. While Warwick was winning triumphs on battle-field after battle-field, the young King seemed to abandon himself to a voluptuous indolence, to revels with the city wives of London, and to the caresses of mistresses like Jane Shore. Tall in stature and of singular beauty, his winning manners and gay carelessness of bearing secured Edward a popularity which had been denied to nobler kings. When he asked a rich old lady for ten pounds towards a war with France, she answered, "For thy comely face thou shalt have twenty." The King thanked and kissed her, and the old woman made her twenty forty. In outer appearance indeed no one could contrast more utterly with the subtle sovereigns of his time, with the mean-visaged Lewis of France or the meanly-clad Ferdinand of Aragon. But Edward's work was the same as theirs and it was done as completely. While jesting with aldermen, or dallying with mistresses, or idling over new pages from the printing press at

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Westminster, Edward was silently laying the foundations of an absolute rule.

The very faults of his nature helped him to success. His pleasure-loving and self-indulgent temper needed the pressure of emergency, of actual danger, to flash out into action. Men like Commynes who saw him only in moments of security and indolence scorned Edward as dull, sensual, easy to be led and gulled by keener wits. It was in the hour of need and despair that his genius showed itself, cool, rapid, subtle, utterly fearless, moving straight to its aim through clouds of treachery and intrigue, and striking hard when its aim was reached. But even in his idler hours his purpose never wavered. His indolence and gaiety were in fact mere veils thrown over a will of steel. From the first his aim was to free the Crown from the control of the baronage. He made no secret of his hostility to the nobles. At Towton as in all his after battles he bade his followers slay knight and baron, but spare the commons. In his earliest Parliament, that of 1461, he renewed the statutes against giving of liveries, and though this enactment proved as fruitless as its predecessors to reduce the households of the baronage it marked Edward's resolve to adhere to the invariable policy of the Crown in striving for their reduction. But efforts like these, though they indicated the young King's policy, could produce little effect so long as the mightiest of the barons overawed the throne. Yet even a king as bold as Edward might well have shrunk from a struggle with Warwick. The Earl was all powerful in the state; the military resources of the realm were in his hands. As captain of Calais he was master of the one disciplined force at the disposal of the Crown, and as admiral he controlled the royal fleet. The strength he drew from his wide possessions, from his vast wealth (for his official revenues alone were estimated at eighty thousand crowns a year), from his warlike renown and his wide kinship, was backed by his personal popularity. Above all the Yorkist party, bound

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to Warwick by a long series of victories, looked on him rather than on the young and untried King as its head. Even Edward was forced to delay any break with the Earl till the desperate struggle of Margaret was over. It was only after her defeat at Hexham and the capture of Henry that the King saw himself free for a strife with the great soldier who overawed the throne.

The policy of Warwick pointed to a close alliance with France. The Hundred Years' War, though it had driven the English from Guienne and the south, had left the French Monarchy hemmed in by great feudatories on every other border. Brittany was almost independent in the west. On the east the house of Anjou lay, restless and ambitious, in Lorraine and Provence, while the house of Burgundy occupied its hereditary duchy and Franche Comté. On the northern frontier the same Burgundian house was massing together into a single state nearly all the crowd of counties, marquisates, and dukedoms which now make up Holland and Belgium. Nobles hardly less powerful or more dependent on the Crown held the central provinces of the kingdom when Lewis the Eleventh mounted its throne but a few months after Edward's accession. The temper of the French King drove him to a strife for the mastery of his realm, and his efforts after centralization and a more effective rule soon goaded the baronage into a mood of revolt. But Lewis saw well that a struggle with it was only possible if England stood aloof. His father's cool sagacity had planned the securing of his conquests by the marriage of Lewis himself to an English wife, and though this project had fallen through, and the civil wars had given safety to France to the end of Charles's reign, the ruin of the Lancastrian cause at Towton again roused the danger of attack from England at the moment when Lewis mounted the throne. Its young and warlike King, the great baron who was still fresh from the glory of Towton, might well resolve to win back the heritage of Eleanor, that Duchy of Guienne which had been lost but

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some ten years before. Even if such an effort proved fruitless, Lewis saw that an English war would not only ruin his plans for the overthrow of the nobles, but would leave him more than ever at their mercy. Above all it would throw him helplessly into the hands of the Burgundian Duke. In the new struggle as in the old the friendship of Burgundy could alone bring a favourable issue, and such a friendship would have to be paid for by sacrifices even more terrible than those which had been wrenched from the need of Charles the Seventh. The passing of Burgundy from the side of England to the side of France after the Treaty of Arras had been bought by the cession to its Duke of the towns along the Somme, of that Picardy which brought the Burgundian frontier to some fifty miles from Paris. Sacrifices even more costly would have to buy the aid of Burgundy in a struggle with Edward the Fourth.

The
Triple
Alliance.

How vivid was his sense of these dangers was seen in the eagerness of Lewis to get the truce with England renewed and extended. But his efforts for a general peace broke down before the demands of the English council for the restoration of Normandy and Guienne. Nor were his difficulties from England alone. An English alliance was unpopular in France itself. "Seek no friendship from the English, Sire!" said Pierre de Brezé, the Seneschal of Normandy, "for the more they love you, the more all Frenchmen will hate you!" All Lewis could do was to fetter Edward's action by giving him work at home. When Margaret appealed to him for aid after Towton he refused any formal help, but her pledge to surrender Calais in case of success drew from him some succour in money and men which enabled the Queen to renew the struggle in the north. Though her effort failed, the hint so roughly given had been enough to change the mood of the English statesmen; the truce with France was renewed, and a different reception met the new proposals of alliance which followed it. Lewis indeed was now busy with an even more pressing danger. In any struggle of the King with England

or the nobles what gave Burgundy its chief weight was the possession of the towns on the Somme, and it was his consciousness of the vital importance of these to his throne that spurred Lewis to the bold and dexterous diplomacy by which Duke Philip the Good, under the influence of counsellors who looked to the French King for protection against the Duke's son, Charles of Charolais, was brought to surrender Picardy on payment of the sum stipulated for its ransom in the Treaty of Arras. The formal surrender of the towns on the Somme took place in October 1463, but they were hardly his own when Lewis turned to press his alliance upon England. From Picardy, where he was busy in securing his newly-won possessions, he sought an interview with Warwick. His danger indeed was still great; for the irritated nobles were already drawing together into a League of the Public Weal, and Charles of Charolais, indignant at the counsellors who severed him from his father and at the King who traded through them on the Duke's dotage, was eager to place himself at its head. But these councillors, the Croys, saw their own ruin as well as the ruin of Lewis in the success of a league of which Charles was the head; and at their instigation Duke Philip busied himself at the opening of 1464 as the mediator of an alliance which would secure Lewis against it, a triple alliance between Burgundy and the French and English Kings.

Such an alliance had now become Warwick's settled policy. In it lay the certainty of peace at home as abroad, the assurance of security to the throne which he had built up. While Margaret of Anjou could look for aid from France the house of York could hope for no cessation of the civil war. A union between France, Burgundy, and England left the partizans of Lancaster without hope. When Lewis therefore summoned him to an interview on the Somme, Warwick, though unable to quit England in face of the dangers which still threatened from the north, promised to send his brother the Chancellor to conduct a

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negotiation. Whether the mission took place or no, the questions not only of peace with France but of a marriage between Edward and one of the French King's kinswomen were discussed in the English Council as early as the spring of 1464, for in the May of that year, at a moment when Warwick was hurrying to the north to crush Margaret's last effort in the battle of Hexham, a Burgundian agent announced to the Croys that an English embassy would be despatched to St. Omer on the coming St. John's day to confer with Lewis and Duke Philip on the peace and the marriage-treaty. The victory of Hexham and the capture of Henry, successes which were accepted by foreign powers as a final settlement of the civil strife, and which left Edward's hands free as they had never been free before, quickened the anxiety of Lewis, who felt every day the toils of the great confederacy of the French princes closing more tightly round him. But Margaret was still in his hands, and Warwick remained firm in his policy of alliance. At Michaelmas the Earl prepared to cross the sea for the meeting at St. Omer.

*Edward's
Marriage.*

It was this moment that Edward chose for a sudden and decisive blow. Only six days before the departure of the embassy the young King informed his Council that he was already wedded. By a second match with a Kentish knight, Sir Richard Woodville, Jacquetta of Luxemburg, the widow of the Regent Duke of Bedford, had become the mother of a daughter Elizabeth. Elizabeth married Sir John Grey, a Lancastrian partizan, but his fall some few years back in the second battle of St. Alban's left her a widow, and she caught the young King's fancy. At the opening of May, at the moment when Warwick's purpose to conclude the marriage-treaty was announced to the court of Burgundy, Edward had secretly made her his wife. He had reserved, however, the announcement of his marriage till the very eve of the negotiations, when its disclosure served not only to shatter Warwick's plans but to strike a sudden and decisive blow at the sway he had wielded till now in the

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royal Council. The blow in fact was so sudden and unexpected that Warwick could only take refuge in a feigned submission. "The King," wrote one of his partizans, Lord Wenlock, to the Court of Burgundy, "has taken a wife at his pleasure, without knowledge of them whom he ought to have called to counsel him; by reason of which it is highly displeasing to many great lords and to the bulk of his Council. But since the marriage has gone so far that it cannot be helped, we must take patience in spite of ourselves." Not only did the negotiations with France come to an end, but the Earl found himself cut off from the King's counsels. "As one knows not," wrote his adherent, "seeing the marriage is made in this way, what purpose the King may have to go on with the other two points, truce or peace, the opinion of the Council is that my Lord of Warwick will not pass the sea till one learns the King's will and pleasure on that point." Even Warwick indeed might have paused before the new aspect of affairs across the Channel. For at this moment the growing weakness of Duke Philip enabled Charles of Charolais to overthrow the Croys, and to become the virtual ruler of the Burgundian states. At the close of 1464 the League of the Public Weal drew fast to a head, and Charles despatched the Chancellor of Burgundy to secure the aid of England. But the English Council met the advances of the League with coldness. Edward himself could have seen little save danger to his throne from its triumph. Count Charles, proud of his connexion with the House of Lancaster through his Portuguese mother, a descendant of John of Gaunt, was known to be hostile to the Yorkist throne. The foremost of his colleagues, John of Calabria, was a son of René of Anjou and a brother of Margaret. Another of the conspirators, the Count of Maine, was Margaret's uncle. It was significant that the Duke of Somerset had found a place in the train of Charles of Charolais. On the other hand the warmest advocates of the French alliance could hardly press for closer relations

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The
Wood-
villes.

with a King whose ruin seemed certain, and even Warwick must have been held back by the utter collapse of the royal power when the League attacked Lewis in 1465. Deserted by every great noble, and cooped up within the walls of Paris, the French King could only save himself by a humiliating submission to the demands of the Leaguers.

The close of the struggle justified Edward's policy of inaction, for the terms of the peace told strongly for English interests. The restoration of the towns on the Somme to Burgundy, the cession of Normandy to the King's brother, Francis, the hostility of Brittany, not only detached the whole western coast from the hold of Lewis, but forced its possessors to look for aid to the English King who lay in their rear. But Edward had little time to enjoy this piece of good luck. No sooner had the army of the League broken up than its work was undone. The restless genius of Lewis detached prince from prince, won over the houses of Brittany and Anjou to friendship, snatched back Normandy in January 1466, and gathered an army in Picardy to meet attack either from England or Count Charles. From neither however was any serious danger to be feared. Charles was held at home till the close of the year by revolts at Liège and Dinant, while a war of factions within Edward's court distracted the energies of England. The young King had rapidly followed up the blow of his marriage by raising his wife's family to a greatness which was meant to balance that of the Nevilles. The Queen's father, Lord Rivers, was made treasurer and constable; her brothers and sisters were matched with great nobles and heiresses; the heiress of the Duke of Exeter, Edward's niece, whose hand Warwick sought for his brother's son, was betrothed to Elizabeth's son by her former marriage. The King's confidence was given to his new kinsmen, and Warwick saw himself checked even at the council-board by the influence of the Woodvilles. Still true to an alliance with France, he was met by their advocacy of an

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The two
alliances.

alliance with Burgundy, where Charles of Charolais through his father's sickness and age was now supreme. Both powers were equally eager for English aid. Lewis despatched an envoy to prolong the truce from his camp on the Somme, and proposed to renew negotiations for a marriage treaty by seeking the hand of Edward's sister, Margaret, for a French prince. Though "the thing which Charles hated most," as Commynes tells us, "was the house of York," the stress of politics drew him as irresistibly to Edward. His wife, Isabella of Bourbon, had died during the war of the League, and much as such a union was "against his heart," the activity of Lewis forced him at the close of 1466 to seek to buy English aid by demanding Margaret's hand in marriage.

It is from this moment that the two great lines of our foreign policy become settled and defined. In drawing together the states of the Low Countries into a single political body, the Burgundian Dukes had built up a power which has ever since served as a barrier against the advance of France to the north or its mastery of the Rhine. To maintain this power, whether in the hands of the Dukes or their successors, the Spaniard or the Emperor, has always been a foremost object of English statesmanship; and the Burgundian alliance in its earlier or later shapes has been the constant rival of the alliance with France. At this moment however the attitude of Burgundy was one rather of attack than of defence. If Charles did not aim at the direct conquest of France, he looked to such a weakening of it as would prevent Lewis from hindering the great plan on which he had set his heart, the plan of uniting his scattered dominions on the northern and eastern frontier of his rival by the annexation of Lorraine, and of raising them into a great European power by extending his dominion along the whole course of the Rhine. His policy was still to strengthen the great feudatories against the Crown. "I love France so much," he laughed, "that I had rather it had six kings than one;"

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and weak as the league of the Public Weal had proved he was already trying to build up a new confederacy against Lewis. In this confederacy he strove that England should take part. Throughout 1466 the English court was the field for a diplomatic struggle between Charles and Lewis. Warwick pressed Margaret's marriage with one of the French princes. The marriage with Charles was backed by the Woodvilles. Edward bore himself between the two parties with matchless perfidy. Apparently yielding to the counsels of the Earl, he despatched him in 1467 to treat for peace with Lewis at Rouen. Warwick was received with honours which marked the importance of his mission in the French King's eyes. Bishops and clergy went out to meet him, his attendants received gifts of velvet robes and the rich stuffs of Rouen, and for twelve days the Earl and Lewis were seen busy in secret conference. But while the Earl was busy with the French King the Great Bastard of Burgundy crossed to England, and a sumptuous tourney, in which he figured with one of the Woodvilles, hardly veiled the progress of counter negotiations between Charles and Edward himself. The young King seized on the honours paid to Warwick as the pretext for an outburst of jealousy. The seals were suddenly taken from his brother, the Archbishop of York, and when the Earl himself returned with a draft-treaty, stipulating a pension from France and a reference of the English claims on Normandy and Guienne to the Pope's decision, Edward listened coldly and disavowed his envoy.

The over-throw of
Warwick.

Bitter reproaches on his intrigues with the French King marked even more vividly the close of Warwick's power. He withdrew from court to his castle of Middleham, while the conclusion of a marriage-treaty between Charles and Margaret proved the triumph of his rivals. The death of his father in the summer of 1467 raised Charles to the Dukedom of Burgundy, and his diplomatic success in England was followed by preparations for a new

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struggle with the French King. In 1468 a formal league bound England, Burgundy, and Brittany together against Lewis. While Charles gathered an army in Picardy Edward bound himself to throw a body of troops into the strong places of Normandy which were held by the Breton Duke; and six thousand mounted archers under the Queen's brother, Anthony, Lord Scales, were held ready to cross the Channel. Parliament was called together in May, and the announcement of the Burgundian alliance and of the King's purpose to recover his heritage over sea was met by a large grant of supplies from the Commons. In June the pompous marriage of Margaret with the Burgundian Duke set its seal on Edward's policy. How strongly the current of national feeling ran in its favour was seen in Warwick's humiliation. The Earl was helpless. The King's dexterous use of his conference with Lewis and of the honours he had received from him gave him the colour of a false Englishman and of a friend to France. Warwick lost power over the Yorkists. The war party, who formed the bulk of it, went hotly with the King; the merchants, who were its most powerful support, leaned to a close connexion with the master of Flanders and the Lower Rhine. The danger of his position drove Warwick further and further from his old standing ground; he clung for aid to Lewis; he became the French king's pensioner and dependent. At the French court he was looked upon already as a partizan of the House of Lancaster. Edward dexterously seized on the rumour to cut him off more completely from his old party. He called on him to confront his accusers; and though Warwick purged himself of the charge, the stigma remained. The victor of Towton was no longer counted as a good Yorkist. But triumphant as he was, Edward had no mind to drive the Earl into revolt, nor was Warwick ready for revenge. The two subtle enemies drew together again. The Earl appeared at court; he was formally reconciled both to the King and to the Woodvilles; as though to announce his conversion to the

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Burgundian alliance he rode before the new Duchess Margaret on her way to the sea. His submission removed the last obstacle to the King's action, and Edward declared his purpose to take the field in person against the King of France.

The Marriage of Clarence.

But at the moment when the danger seemed greatest the quick, hard blows of Lewis paralyzed the League. He called Margaret from Bar to Harfleur, where Jasper Tudor, the Earl of Pembroke, prepared to cross with a small force of French soldiers into Wales. The dread of a Lancastrian rising should Margaret land in England hindered Lord Scales from crossing the sea; and marking the slowness with which the Burgundian troops gathered in Picardy Lewis flung himself in September on the Breton Duke, reduced him to submission, and exacted the surrender of the Norman towns which offered an entry for the English troops. His eagerness to complete his work by persuading Charles to recognize his failure in a personal interview threw him into the Duke's hands; and though he was released at the end of the year it was only on humiliating terms. But the danger from the triple alliance was over; he had bought a fresh peace with Burgundy, and Edward's hopes of French conquest were utterly foiled. We can hardly doubt that this failure told on the startling revolution which marked the following year. Master of Calais, wealthy, powerful as he was, Warwick had shown by his feigned submission a consciousness that single-handed he was no match for the King. In detaching from him the confidence of the Yorkist party which had regarded him as its head, Edward had robbed him of his strength. But the King was far from having won the Yorkist party to himself. His marriage with the widow of a slain Lancastrian, his promotion of a Lancastrian family to the highest honours, estranged him from the men who had fought his way to the Crown. Warwick saw that the Yorkists could still be rallied round the elder of Edward's brothers, the Duke

of Clarence; and the temper of Clarence, weak and greedy of power, hating the Woodvilles, looking on himself as heir to the crown yet dreading the claims of Edward's daughter Elizabeth, lent itself to his arts. The spring of 1469 was spent in intrigues to win over Clarence by offering him the hand of Warwick's elder daughter and co-heiress, and in preparations for a rising in Lancashire. So secretly were these conducted that Edward was utterly taken by surprise when Clarence and the Earl met in July at Calais and the marriage of the Duke proved the signal for a rising at home.

The revolt turned out a formidable one. The first force sent against it was cut to pieces at Edgecote near Banbury, and its leaders, Earl Rivers and one of the queen's brothers, taken and beheaded. Edward was hurrying to the support of this advanced body when it was defeated; but on the news his force melted away and he was driven to fall back upon London. Galled as he had been by his brother's marriage, he saw nothing in it save the greed of Clarence for the Earl's heritage, and it was with little distrust that he summoned Warwick with the trained troops who formed the garrison of Calais to his aid. The Duke and Earl at once crossed the Channel. Gathering troops as they moved, they joined Edward near Oxford, and the end of their plot was at last revealed. No sooner had the armies united than Edward found himself virtually a prisoner in Warwick's hands. But the bold scheme broke down. The Yorkist nobles demanded the King's liberation. London called for it. The Duke of Burgundy "practised secretly," says Commynes, "that King Edward might escape," and threatened to break off all trade with Flanders if he were not freed. Warwick could look for support only to the Lancastrians, but the Lancastrians demanded Henry's restoration as the price of their aid. Such a demand was fatal to the plan for placing Clarence on the throne, and Warwick was thrown back on a formal reconciliation with the King. Edward was

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Warwick's failure.

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freed, and Duke and Earl withdrew to their estates for the winter. But the impulse which Warwick had given to his adherents brought about a new rising in the spring of 1470. A force gathered in Lincolnshire under Sir Robert Welles with the avowed purpose of setting Clarence on the throne; and Warwick and the Duke, though summoned to Edward's camp on pain of being held for traitors, remained sullenly aloof. The King however was now ready for the strife. A rapid march to the north ended in the rout of the insurgents, and Edward turned on the instigators of the rising. But Clarence and the Earl could gather no force to meet him. Yorkist and Lancastrian alike held aloof, and they were driven to flight. Calais, though held by Warwick's deputy, repulsed them from its walls, and the Earl's fleet was forced to take refuge in the harbours of France.

*Warwick
in France.*

The long struggle seemed at last over. In subtlety as in warlike daring the young King had proved himself more than a match for the "subtlest man of men now living." He had driven him to throw himself on "our adversary of France." Warwick's hold over the Yorkists was all but gone. His own brothers, the Earl of Northumberland and the Archbishop of York, held with the King, and Edward counted on the first as a firm friend. Warwick had lost Calais. Though he still retained his fleet he was forced to support it by making prizes of Flemish ships, and this involved him in fresh difficulties. The Duke of Burgundy made the reception of these ships in French harbours the pretext for a new strife with Lewis; he seized the goods of French merchants at Bruges and demanded redress. Lewis was in no humour for risking for so small a matter the peace he had won, and refused to see or speak with Warwick till the prizes were restored. But he was soon driven from this neutral position. The violent language of Duke Charles showed his desire to renew the war with France in the faith that Warwick's presence at the French court would ensure

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Edward's support; and Lewis resolved to prevent such a war by giving Edward work to do at home. He supplied Warwick with money and men, and pressed him to hasten his departure for England. "You know," he wrote to an agent, "the desire I have for Warwick's return to England, as well because I wish to see him get the better of his enemies as that at least through him the realm of England may be again thrown into confusion, so as to avoid the questions which have arisen out of his residence here." But Warwick was too cautious a statesman to hope to win England with French troops only. His hopes of Yorkist aid were over with the failure of Clarence; and, covered as he was with Lancastrian blood, he turned to the House of Lancaster. Margaret was summoned to the French court; the mediation of Lewis bent her proud spirit to a reconciliation on Warwick's promise to restore her husband to the throne, and after a fortnight's struggle she consented at the close of July to betroth her son to the earl's second daughter, Anne Neville. Such an alliance shielded Warwick, as he trusted, from Lancastrian vengeance, but it at once detached Clarence from his cause. Edward had already made secret overtures to his brother, and though Warwick strove to reconcile the Duke to his new policy by a provision that in default of heirs to the son of Margaret Clarence should inherit the throne, the Duke's resentment drew him back to his brother's side. But whether by Edward's counsel or no his resentment was concealed; Clarence swore fealty to the house of Lancaster, and joined in the preparations which Warwick was making for a landing in England.

What the Earl really counted on was not so much Lancastrian aid as Yorkist treason. Edward reckoned on the loyalty of Warwick's brothers, the Archbishop of York and Lord Montagu. The last indeed he "loved," and Montagu's firm allegiance during his brother's defection seemed to justify his confidence in him. But in his desire to redress some of the wrongs of the civil war Edward

*Edward
driven out.*

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had utterly estranged the Nevilles. In 1469 he released Henry Percy from the Tower, and restored to him the title and estates of his father, the attainted Earl of Northumberland. Montagu had possessed both as his share of the Yorkist spoil, and though Edward made him a marquis in amends he had ever since nursed plans of revenge. From after events it is clear that he had already pledged himself to betray the King. But his treachery was veiled with consummate art, and in spite of repeated warnings from Burgundy Edward remained unconcerned at the threats of invasion. Of the Yorkist party he held himself secure since Warwick's desertion of their cause; of the Lancastrians he had little fear; and the powerful fleet of Duke Charles prisoned the Earl's ships in the Norman harbours. Fortune however was with his foes. A rising called Edward to the north in September, and while he was engaged in its suppression a storm swept the Burgundian ships from the Channel. Warwick seized the opportunity to cross the sea. On the thirteenth of September he landed with Clarence at Dartmouth, and with an army which grew at every step pushed rapidly northward to meet the King. Taken as he was by surprise, Edward felt little dread of the conflict. He relied on the secret promises of Clarence and on the repeated oaths of the two Nevilles, and called on Charles of Burgundy to cut off Warwick's retreat by sea after the victory on which he counted. But the Earl's army no sooner drew near than cries of "Long live King Henry!" from Montagu's camp announced his treason. Panic spread through the royal forces; and in the rout that followed Edward could only fly to the shore, and embarking some eight hundred men who still clung to him in a few trading vessels which he found there set sail for the coast of Holland.

Warwick's triumph.

In a single fortnight Warwick had destroyed a throne. The work of Towton was undone. The House of Lancaster was restored. Henry the Sixth was drawn from

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the Tower to play again the part of King, while his rival could only appeal as a destitute fugitive to the friendship of Charles the Bold. But Charles had small friendship to give. His disgust at the sudden overthrow of his plans for a joint attack on Lewis was quickened by a sense of danger. England was now at the French King's disposal, and the coalition of England and Burgundy against France which he had planned seemed likely to become a coalition of France and England against Burgundy. Lewis indeed was quick to seize on the new turn of affairs. Thanksgivings were ordered in every French town. Margaret and her son were feasted royally at Paris. An embassy crossed the sea to conclude a treaty of alliance, and Warwick promised that an immediate force of four thousand men should be despatched to Calais. With English aid the King felt he could become assailant in his turn; he declared the Duke of Burgundy a rebel, and pushed his army rapidly to the Somme. How keenly Charles felt his danger was seen in his refusal to receive Edward at his court, and in his desperate attempts to conciliate the new English government. His friendship, he said, was not for this or that English King but for England. He again boasted of his Lancastrian blood. He despatched the Lancastrian Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, who had found refuge ever since Towton at his court, to carry fair words to Margaret. The Queen and her son were still at Paris, detained as it was said by unfavourable winds, but really by the wish of Lewis to hold a check upon Warwick and by their own distrust of him. Triumphant indeed as he seemed, the Earl found himself alone in the hour of his triumph. The marriage of Prince Edward with Anne Neville, which had been promised as soon as Henry was restored, was his one security against the vengeance of the Lancastrians, and the continued delays of Margaret showed little eagerness to redeem her promise. The heads of the Lancastrian party, the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, had pledged

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*Fall of
Warwick.*

themselves to Charles the Bold at their departure from his court to bring about Warwick's ruin. From Lewis he could look for no further help, for the remonstrances of the English merchants compelled him in spite of the treaty he had concluded to keep the troops he had promised against Burgundy at home. Of his own main supporters Clarence was only waiting for an opportunity of deserting him. Even his brother Montagu shrank from striking fresh blows to further the triumph of a party which aimed at the ruin of the Nevilles, and looked forward with dread to the coming of the Queen.

The preparations for her departure in March brought matters to a head. With a French Queen on the throne a French alliance became an instant danger for Burgundy, and Charles was driven to lend a secret ear to Edward's prayer for aid. Money and ships were placed at his service, and on the fourteenth of March 1471 the young King landed at Ravenspur on the estuary of the Humber with a force of two thousand men. In the north all remained quiet. York opened its gates when Edward professed to be seeking not the crown but his father's dukedom. Montagu lay motionless at Pomfret as the little army marched by him to the south. Routing at Newark a force which had gathered on his flank, Edward pushed straight for Warwick, who had hurried from London to raise an army in his own county. His forces were already larger than those of his cousin, but the Earl cautiously waited within the walls of Coventry for the reinforcements under Clarence and Montagu which he believed to be hastening to his aid. The arrival of Clarence however was at once followed by his junction with Edward, and the offer of "good conditions" shows that Warwick himself was contemplating a similar treason when the coming of two Lancastrian leaders, the Duke of Exeter and the Earl of Oxford, put an end to the negotiation. The union of Montagu with his brother forced Edward to decisive action; he marched upon London, followed closely by

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Warwick's army, and found its gates opened by the perfidy of Archbishop Neville. Again master of Henry of Lancaster who passed anew to the Tower, Edward sallied afresh from the capital two days after his arrival with an army strongly reinforced. At early dawn on the fourteenth of April the two hosts fronted one another at Barnet. A thick mist covered the field, and beneath its veil Warwick's men fought fiercely till dread of mutual betrayal ended the strife. Montagu's followers attacked the Lancastrian soldiers of Lord Oxford, whether as some said through an error which sprang from the similarity of his cognizance to that of Edward's, or as the Lancastrians alleged while themselves in the act of deserting to the enemy. Warwick himself was charged with cowardly flight. In three hours the medley of carnage and treason was over. Four thousand men lay on the field; and the Earl and his brother were found among the slain.

But the fall of the Nevilles was far from giving rest to Edward. The restoration of Henry, the return of their old leaders, had revived the hopes of the Lancastrian party; and in the ruin of Warwick they saw only the removal of an obstacle to their cause. The great Lancastrian lords had been looking forward to a struggle with the Earl on Margaret's arrival, and their jealousy of him was seen in the choice of the Queen's landing-place. Instead of joining her husband and the Nevilles in London she disembarked from the French fleet at Weymouth, to find the men of the western counties already flocking to the standards of the Duke of Somerset and of the Courtenays, the Welsh arming at the call of Jasper Tudor, and Cheshire and Lancashire only waiting for her presence to rise. A march upon London with forces such as these would have left Warwick at her mercy and freed the Lancastrian throne from the supremacy of the Nevilles. The news of Barnet which followed hard on the Queen's landing scattered these plans to the winds; but the means which had been designed to overawe Warwick might still

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be employed against his conqueror. Moving to Exeter to gather the men of Devonshire and Cornwall, Margaret turned through Taunton on Bath to hear that Edward was already encamped in her front at Cirencester. The young King's action showed his genius for war. Barnet was hardly fought when he was pushing to the west. After a halt at Abingdon to gain news of Margaret's movements he moved rapidly by Cirencester and Malmesbury towards the Lancastrians at Bath. But Margaret was as eager to avoid a battle before her Welsh reinforcements reached her as Edward was to force one on. Slipping aside to Bristol, and detaching a small body of troops to amuse the king by a feint upon Sodbury, her army reached Berkeley by a night-march and hurried forward through the following day to Tewkesbury. But rapid as their movements had been, they had failed to outstrip Edward. Marching on an inner line along the open Cotswold country while his enemy was struggling through the deep and tangled lanes of the Severn valley, the King was now near enough to bring Margaret to bay; and the Lancastrian leaders were forced to take their stand on the slopes south of the town, in a position approachable only through "foul lanes and deep dykes." Here Edward at once fell on them at day-break of the fourth of May. His army, if smaller in numbers, was superior in military quality to the motley host gathered round the Queen, for as at Barnet he had with him a force of Germans armed with hand-guns, then a new weapon in war, and a fine train of artillery. It was probably the fire from these that drew Somerset from the strong position which he held, but his repulse and the rout of the force he led was followed up with quick decision. A general advance broke the Lancastrian lines, and all was over. Three thousand were cut down on the field, and a large number of fugitives were taken in the town and abbey. To the leaders short shrift was given. Edward was resolute to make an end of his foes. The fall of the Duke of

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Somerset extinguished the male branch of the House of Beaufort. Margaret was a prisoner; and with the murder of her son after his surrender on the field and the mysterious death of Henry the Sixth in the Tower which followed the King's return to the capital the direct line of Lancaster passed away.

Edward was at last master of his realm. No noble was likely to measure swords with the conqueror of the Nevilles. The one rival who could revive the Lancastrian claims, the last heir of the House of Beaufort, Henry Tudor, was a boy and an exile. The King was free to display his genius for war on nobler fields than those of Barnet and Tewkesbury, and for a while his temper and the passion of his people alike drove him to the strife with France. But the country was too exhausted to meddle in the attack on Lewis which Charles, assured at any rate against English hostility, renewed in 1472 in union with the Dukes of Guienne and Brittany, and which was foiled as of old through the death of the one ally and the desertion of the other. The failure aided in giving a turn to his policy, which was to bring about immense results on the after history of Europe. French as he was in blood, the nature of his possessions had made Charles from the first a German prince rather than a French. If he held of Lewis his duchy of Burgundy, his domain on the Somme, and Flanders west of the Scheldt, the mass of his dominions was held of the Empire. While he failed too in extending his power on the one side it widened rapidly on the other. In war after war he had been unable to gain an inch of French ground beyond the towns of the Somme. But year after year had seen new gains on his German frontier. Elsass and the Breisgau passed into his hands as security for a loan to the Austrian Duke Sigismund; in 1473 he seized Lorraine by force of arms, and inherited from its Duke Gelderland and the county of Cleves. Master of the Upper Rhine and Lower Rhine, as well as of a crowd of German princedoms, Charles was

*Charles
and the
Empire.*

CHAP. I. now the mightiest among the princes of the Empire, and in actual power superior to the Emperor himself. The house of Austria, in which the Imperial crown seemed to be becoming hereditary, was weakened by attacks from without as by divisions within, by the loss of Bohemia and Hungary, by the loss of its hold over German Switzerland, and still more by the mean and spiritless temper of its Imperial head, Frederick the Third. But its ambition remained boundless as ever; and in the Burgundian dominion, destined now to be the heritage of a girl, for Mary was the Duke's only child, it saw the means of building up a greatness such as it had never known. Its overtures at once turned the Duke's ambition from France to Germany. He was ready to give his daughter's hand to Frederick's son, Maximilian; but his price was that of succession to the Imperial crown, and his election to the dignity of King of the Romans. In such an event the Empire and his vast dominions would pass together at his death to Maximilian, and the aim of the Austrian House would be realized. It was to negotiate this marriage, a marriage which in the end was destined to shape the political map of modern Europe, that Duke and Emperor met in 1473 at Trier.

*Peace
with
France.*

But if Frederick's policy was to strengthen his house the policy of the princes of the Empire lay in keeping it weak; and their pressure was backed by suspicions of the Duke's treachery and of the possibility of a later marriage whose male progeny might for ever exclude the house of Austria from the Imperial throne. Frederick's sudden flight broke up the conference; but Charles was far from relinquishing his plans. To win the mastery of the whole Rhine valley was the first step in their realization, and at the opening of 1474 he undertook the siege of Neuss, whose reduction meant that of Köln and of the central district which broke his sway along it. But vast as were the new dreams of ambition which thus opened before Charles, he had given no open sign of his change of

purpose. Lewis watched his progress on the Rhine almost as jealously as his attitude on the Somme; and the friendship of England was still of the highest value as a check on any attempt of France to interrupt his plans. With this view the Duke maintained his relations with England and fed Edward's hopes of a joint invasion. In the summer of 1474, on the eve of his march upon the Rhine, he concluded a treaty for an attack on France which was to open on his return after the capture of Neuss. Edward was to recover Normandy and Aquitaine as well as his 'kingdom of France'; Champagne and Bar were to be the prizes of Charles. Through the whole of 1474 the English king prepared actively for war. A treaty was concluded with Brittany. The nation was wild with enthusiasm. Large supplies were granted by Parliament: and a large army gathered for the coming campaign. The plan of attack was a masterly one. While Edward moved from Normandy on Paris, the forces of Burgundy and of Brittany on his right hand and his left were to converge on the same point. But the aim of Charles in these negotiations was simply to hold Lewis from any intervention in his campaign on the Rhine. The siege of Neuss was not opened till the close of July, and its difficulties soon unfolded themselves. Once master of the whole Rhineland, the house of Austria saw that Charles would be strong enough to wrest from it the succession to the Empire; and while Sigismund paid back his loan and roused Elsass to revolt the Emperor Frederick brought the whole force of Germany to the relief of the town. From that moment the siege was a hopeless one, but Charles clung to it with stubborn pride through autumn, winter, and spring, and it was only at the close of June 1475 that the menace of new leagues against his dominions on the upper Rhineland forced him to withdraw. So broken was his army that he could not, even if he would, have aided in carrying out the schemes of the preceding year. But an English invasion would secure him from attack by Lewis till his forces could be reorganized;

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and with the same unscrupulous selfishness as of old Charles pledged himself to co-operate and called on Edward to cross the Channel. In July Edward landed with an army of twenty-four thousand men at Calais. In numbers and in completeness of equipment no such force had as yet left English shores. But no Burgundian force was seen on the Somme; and after long delays Charles proposed that Edward should advance alone upon Paris on his assurance that the fortresses of the Somme would open their gates. The English army crossed the Somme and approached St. Quentin, but it was repulsed from the walls by a discharge of artillery. It was now the middle of August, and heavy rains prevented further advance; while only excuses for delay came from Brittany and it became every day clearer that the Burgundian Duke had no real purpose to aid. Lewis seized the moment of despair to propose peace on terms which a conqueror might have accepted, the security of Brittany, the payment of what the English deemed a tribute of fifty thousand crowns a year, and the betrothal of Edward's daughter to the Dauphin. A separate treaty provided for mutual aid in case of revolt among the subjects of either king; and for mutual shelter should either be driven from his realm. In spite of remonstrances from the Duke of Burgundy this truce was signed at the close of August and the English soldiers recrossed the sea.

Edward's
policy.

The desertion of Charles threw Edward whether he would or no on the French alliance; and the ruin of the Duke explains the tenacity with which he clung to it. Defeated by the Swiss at Morat in the following year, Charles fell in the opening of 1477 on the field of Nanci, and his vast dominion was left in his daughter's charge. Lewis seized Picardy and Artois, the Burgundian duchy and Franche Comté: and strove to gain the rest by forcing on Mary of Burgundy the hand of the Dauphin. But the Imperial dreams which had been fatal to Charles had to be carried out through the very ruin they wrought. Pressed by

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revolt in Flanders and by the French king's greed, Mary gave her hand to the Emperor's son, Maximilian; and her heritage passed to the Austrian house. Edward took no part in the war between Lewis and Maximilian which followed on the marriage. The contest between England and France had drifted into a mightier European struggle between France and the House of Austria; and from this struggle the King wisely held aloof. He saw what Henry the Seventh saw after him, and what Henry the Eighth learned at last to see, that England could only join in such a contest as the tool of one or other of the combatants, a tool to be used while the struggle lasted and to be thrown aside as soon as it was over. With the growth of Austrian power England was secure from French aggression; and rapidly as Lewis was adding province after province to his dominions his loyalty to the pledge he had given of leaving Brittany untouched and his anxiety to conclude a closer treaty of amity in 1478 showed the price he set on his English alliance. Nor was Edward's course guided solely by considerations of foreign policy. A French alliance meant peace; and peace was needful for the plans which Edward proceeded steadily to carry out. With the closing years of his reign the Monarchy took a new colour. The introduction of an elaborate spy system, the use of the rack, and the practice of interference with the purity of justice gave the first signs of an arbitrary rule which the Tudors were to develope. It was on his creation of a new financial system that the King laid the foundation of a despotic rule. Rich, and secure at home as abroad, Edward had small need to call the Houses together; no parliament met for five years, and when one was called at last it was suffered to do little but raise the custom duties, which were now granted to the King for life. Sums were extorted from the clergy; monopolies were sold; the confiscations of the civil war filled the royal exchequer; Edward did not disdain to turn merchant on his own account. The promise of a

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French war had not only drawn heavy subsidies from the Commons, much of which remained in the royal treasury through the abrupt close of the strife, but enabled the King to deal a deadly blow at the liberty which the Commons had won. Edward set aside the usage of contracting loans by authority of parliament; and calling before him the merchants of London, begged from each a gift or "benevolence" in proportion to the royal needs. How bitterly this exaction was resented even by the classes with whom the King had been most popular was seen in the protest which the citizens addressed to his successor against these "extortions and new impositions against the laws of God and man and the liberty and laws of this realm." But for the moment resistance was fruitless, and the "benevolence" of Edward was suffered to furnish a precedent for the forced loans of Wolsey and of Charles the First.

*Popular-
ization of
know-
ledge.*

In the history of intellectual progress his reign takes a brighter colour. The founder of a new despotism presents a claim to our regard as the patron of Caxton. It is in the life of the first English printer that we see the new upgrowth of larger and more national energies which were to compensate for the decay of the narrower energies of the Middle Age. Beneath the mouldering forms of the old world a new world was bursting into life; if the fifteenth century was an age of death it was an age of birth as well, of that new birth, that Renaissance, from which the after life of Europe was to flow. The force which till now concentrated itself in privileged classes was beginning to diffuse itself through nations. The tendency of the time was to expansion, to diffusion. The smaller gentry and the merchant class rose in importance as the nobles fell. Religion and morality passed out of the hands of the priesthood into those of the laity. Knowledge became vulgarized, it stooped to lower and meaner forms that it might educate the whole people. England was slow to catch the intellectual fire which was already burning

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brightly across the Alps, but even amidst the turmoil of its wars and revolutions intelligence was being more widely spread. While the older literary class was dying out, a glance beneath the surface shows us the stir of a new interest in knowledge amongst the masses of the people itself. The very character of the authorship of the time, its love of compendiums and abridgements of such scientific and historical knowledge as the world believed it possessed, its dramatic performances or mysteries, the commonplace morality of its poets, the popularity of its rimed chronicles, are proof that literature was ceasing to be the possession of a purely intellectual class and was beginning to appeal to the nation at large. The correspondence of the Paston family not only displays a fluency and grammatical correctness which would have been impossible a few years before, but shows country squires discussing about books and gathering libraries. The increased use of linen paper in place of the costlier parchment helped in the popularization of letters. In no former age had finer copies of books been produced; in none had so many been transcribed. This increased demand for their production caused the processes of copying and illuminating manuscripts to be transferred from the scriptoria of the religious houses into the hands of trade-gilds like the Gild of St. John at Bruges or the Brothers of the Pen at Brussels. It was in fact this increase of demand for books, pamphlets, or fly-sheets, especially of a grammatical or religious character, in the middle of the fifteenth century that brought about the introduction of printing. We meet with the first records of the printer's art in rude sheets struck off from wooden blocks, "block-books" as they are now called. Later on came the vast advance of printing from separate and moveable types. Originating at Maintz with the three famous printers, Gutenberg, Fust, and Schœffer, this new process travelled southward to Strassburg, crossed the Alps to Venice, where it lent itself through the Aldi

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to the spread of Greek literature in Europe, and then floated down the Rhine to the towns of Flanders.

It was probably at the press of Colard Mansion, in a little room over the porch of St. Donat's at Bruges, that William Caxton learned the art which he was the first to introduce into England. A Kentish boy by birth, but apprenticed to a London mercer, Caxton had already spent thirty years of his manhood in Flanders as Governor of the English gild of Merchant Adventurers there when we find him engaged as copyist in the service of Edward's sister, Duchess Margaret of Burgundy. But the tedious process of copying was soon thrown aside for the new art which Colard Mansion had introduced into Bruges. "For as much as in the writing of the same," Caxton tells us in the preface to his first printed work, the *Tales of Troy*, "my pen is worn, my hand weary and not steadfast, mine eyes dimmed with over much looking on the white paper, and my courage not so prone and ready to labour as it hath been, and that age creepeth on me daily and feebleth all the body, and also because I have promised to divers gentlemen and to my friends to address to them as hastily as I might the said book, therefore I have practised and learned at my great charge and dispense to ordain this said book in print after the manner and form as ye may see, and is not written with pen and ink as other books be, to the end that every man may have them at once, for all the books of this story here empynted as ye see were begun in one day and also finished in one day." The printing-press was the precious freight he brought back to England in 1476 after an absence of five-and-thirty years. Through the next fifteen, at an age when other men look for ease and retirement, we see him plunging with characteristic energy into his new occupation. His "red pale", or heraldic shield marked with a red bar down the middle, invited buyers to the press he established in the Almonry at Westminster, a little enclosure contain-

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ing a chapel and almshouses near the west front of the church, where the alms of the abbey were distributed to the poor. "If it please any man, spiritual or temporal," runs his advertisement, "to buy any pyes of two or three commemorations of Salisbury all empynted after the form of the present letter, which be well and truly correct, let him come to Westminster into the Almonry at the red pale, and he shall have them good chepe." Caxton was a practical man of business, as this advertisement shows, no rival of the Venetian Aldi or of the classical printers of Rome, but resolved to get a living from his trade, supplying priests with service books and preachers with sermons, furnishing the clerk with his "Golden Legend" and knight and baron with "joyous and pleasant histories of chivalry." But while careful to win his daily bread, he found time to do much for what of higher literature lay fairly to hand. He printed all the English poetry of any moment which was then in existence. His reverence for that "worshipful man, Geoffrey Chaucer," who "ought to be eternally remembered," is shown not merely by his edition of the "*Canterbury Tales*," but by his reprint of them when a purer text of the poem offered itself. The poems of Lydgate and Gower were added to those of Chaucer. The *Chronicle of Brut* and Higden's "*Polychronicon*" were the only available works of an historical character then existing in the English tongue, and Caxton not only printed them but himself continued the latter up to his own time. A translation of Boethius, a version of the *Eneid* from the French, and a tract or two of Cicero, were the stray first-fruits of the classical press in England.

Busy as was Caxton's printing-press, he was even busier as a translator than as a printer. More than four thousand of his printed pages are from works of his own rendering. The need of these translations shows the popular drift of literature at the time; but keen as the demand seems to have been, there is nothing mechanical in the temper with

Caxton's
work.

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which Caxton prepared to meet it. A natural, simple-hearted taste and enthusiasm, especially for the style and forms of language, breaks out in his curious prefaces. "Having no work in hand," he says in the preface to his *Eneid*, "I sitting in my study where as lay many divers pamphlets and books, happened that to my hand came a little book in French, which late was translated out of Latin by some noble clerk of France—which book is named *Eneydos*, and made in Latin by that noble poet and great clerk Vergyl—in which book I had great pleasure by reason of the fair and honest termes and wordes in French which I never saw to-fore-like, none so pleasant nor so well ordered, which book as me seemed should be much requisite for noble men to see, as well for the eloquence as the histories; and when I had advised me to this said book I deliberated and concluded to translate it into English, and forthwith took a pen and ink and wrote a leaf or twain." But the work of translation involved a choice of English which made Caxton's work important in the history of our language. He stood between two schools of translation, that of French affectation and English pedantry. It was a moment when the character of our literary tongue was being settled, and it is curious to see in his own words the struggle over it which was going on in Caxton's time. "Some honest and great clerks have been with me and desired me to write the most curious terms that I could find;" on the other hand, "some gentlemen of late blamed me, saying that in my translations I had over many curious terms which could not be understood of common people, and desired me to use old and homely terms in my translations." "Fain would I please every man," comments the good-humoured printer, but his sturdy sense saved him alike from the temptations of the court and the schools. His own taste pointed to English, but "to the common terms that be daily used" rather than to the English of his antiquarian advisers. "I took an old book and read therein, and

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certainly the English was so rude and broad I could not well understand it," while the Old-English charters which the Abbot of Westminster lent as models from the archives of his house seemed "more like to Dutch than to English." To adopt current phraseology however was by no means easy at a time when even the speech of common talk was in a state of rapid flux. "Our language now used varieth far from that which was used and spoken when I was born." Not only so, but the tongue of each shire was still peculiar to itself and hardly intelligible to men of another county. "Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another so much, that in my days happened that certain merchants were in a ship in Thames for to have sailed over the sea into Zealand, and for lack of wind they tarried at Foreland and went on land for to refresh them. And one of them, named Sheffield, a mercer, came into a house and asked for meat, and especially he asked them after eggs. And the good wife answered that she could speak no French. And the merchant was angry, for he also could speak no French, but would have eggs, but she understood him not. And then at last another said he would have eyren, then the good wife said she understood him well. Lo! what should a man in these days now write," adds the puzzled printer, "eggs or eyren? certainly it is hard to please every man by cause of diversity and change of language." His own mother-tongue too was that of "Kent in the Weald, where I doubt not is spoken as broad and rude English as in any place in England;" and coupling this with his long absence in Flanders we can hardly wonder at the confession he makes over his first translation, that "when all these things came to fore me, after that I had made and written a five or six quires, I fell in despair of this work, and purposed never to have continued therein, and the quires laid apart, and in two years after laboured no more in this work."

He was still however busy translating when he died.

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All difficulties in fact were lightened by the general interest which his labours aroused. When the length of the "Golden Legend" makes him "half desperate to have accomplished it" and ready to "lay it apart," the Earl of Arundel solicits him in no wise to leave it and promises a yearly fee of a buck in summer and a doe in winter, once it were done. "Many noble and divers gentle men of this realm came and demanded many and often times wherefore I have not made and imprinted the noble history of the 'San Graal.'" We see his visitors discussing with the sagacious printer the historic existence of Arthur. Duchess Margaret of Somerset lent him her "Blanchardine and Eglantine;" an Archdeacon of Colchester brought him his translation of the work called "Cato;" a mercer of London pressed him to undertake the "Royal Book" of Philip le Bel. Earl Rivers chatted with him over his own translation of the "Sayings of the Philosophers." Even kings showed their interest in his work; his "Tully" was printed under the patronage of Edward the Fourth, his "Order of Chivalry" dedicated to Richard the Third, his "Facts of Arms" published at the desire of Henry the Seventh. Caxton profited in fact by the wide literary interest which was a mark of the time. The fashion of large and gorgeous libraries had passed from the French to the English princes of his day: Henry the Sixth had a valuable collection of books; that of the Louvre was seized by Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and formed the basis of the fine library which he presented to the University of Oxford. Great nobles took an active and personal part in the literary revival. The warrior, Sir John Fastolf, was a well-known lover of books. Earl Rivers was himself one of the authors of the day; he found leisure in the intervals of pilgrimages and politics to translate the "Sayings of the Philosophers" and a couple of religious tracts for Caxton's press. A friend of far greater intellectual distinction however than these was found in John Tiptoft Earl of Worcester. He had

wandered during the reign of Henry the Sixth in search of learning to Italy, had studied at her universities and become a teacher at Padua, where the elegance of his Latinity drew tears from the most learned of the Popes, Pius the Second, better known as Æneas Sylvius. Caxton can find no words warm enough to express his admiration of one "which in his time flowered in virtue and cunning, to whom I know none like among the lords of the temporality in science and moral virtue." But the ruthlessness of the Renaissance appeared in Tiptoft side by side with its intellectual vigour, and the fall of one whose cruelty had earned him the surname of "the Butcher" even amidst the horrors of civil war was greeted with sorrow by none but the faithful printer. "What great loss was it," he says in a preface printed long after his fall, "of that noble, virtuous, and well-disposed lord; when I remember and advertise his life, his science, and his virtue, me thinketh (God not displeased) over great the loss of such a man considering his estate and cunning."

Among the nobles who encouraged the work of Caxton was the King's youngest brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester. Edward had never forgiven Clarence his desertion; and his impeachment in 1478 on a charge of treason, a charge soon followed by his death in the Tower, brought Richard nearer to the throne. Ruthless and subtle as Edward himself, the Duke was already renowned as a warrior; his courage and military skill had been shown at Barnet and Tewkesbury; and at the close of Edward's reign an outbreak of strife with the Scots enabled him to march in triumph upon Edinburgh in 1482. The sudden death of his brother called Richard at once to the front. Worn with excesses, though little more than forty years old, Edward died in the spring of 1483, and his son Edward the Fifth succeeded peacefully to the throne. The succession of a boy of thirteen woke again the fierce rivalries of the court. The Woodvilles had the young King in their hands; but Lord Hastings, the chief

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of Glou-
cester.

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adviser of his father, at once joined with Gloucester and the Duke of Buckingham, the heir of Edward the Third's youngest son and one of the greatest nobles of the realm, to overthrow them. The efforts of the Queen-mother to obtain the regency were foiled, Lord Rivers and two Woodvilles were seized and sent to the block, and the King transferred to the charge of Richard, who was proclaimed by a great council of bishops and nobles Protector of the Realm. But if he hated the Queen's kindred Hastings was as loyal as the Woodvilles themselves to the children of Edward the Fourth; and the next step of the two Dukes was to remove this obstacle. Little more than a month had passed after the overthrow of the Woodvilles when Richard suddenly entered the Council-chamber and charged Hastings with sorcery and attempts upon his life. As he dashed his hand upon the table the room filled with soldiery. "I will not dine," said the Duke, turning to the minister, "till they have brought me your head." Hastings was hurried to execution in the court-yard of the Tower, his fellow-counsellors thrown into prison, and the last check on Richard's ambition was removed. Buckingham lent him his aid in a claim of the crown; and on the twenty-fifth of June the Duke consented after some show of reluctance to listen to the prayer of a Parliament hastily gathered together, which, setting aside Edward's children as the fruit of an unlawful marriage and those of Clarence as disabled by his attainder, besought him to take the office and title of King.

Henry
Tudor.

Violent as his acts had been, Richard's career had as yet jarred little with popular sentiment. The Woodvilles were unpopular, Hastings was detested as the agent of Edward's despotism, the reign of a child-king was generally deemed impossible. The country, longing only for peace after all its storms, called for a vigorous and active ruler; and Richard's vigour and ability were seen in his encounter with the first danger that threatened his throne. The new

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revolution had again roused the hopes of the Lancastrian party. With the deaths of Henry the Sixth and his son all the descendants of Henry the Fourth passed away; but the line of John of Gaunt still survived in the heir of the Beauforts. The legality of the royal act which barred their claim to the crown was a more than questionable one; the Beauforts had never admitted it, and the conduct of Henry the Sixth in his earlier years points to a belief in their right of succession. Their male line was extinguished by the fall of the last Duke of Somerset at Tewkesbury, but the claim of the house was still maintained by the son of Margaret Beaufort, the daughter of Duke John and great-grand-daughter of John of Gaunt. While still but a girl Margaret had become both wife and mother. She had wedded the Earl of Richmond, Edmund Tudor, a son of Henry the Fifth's widow, Katharine of France, by a marriage with a Welsh squire, Owen Tudor; and had given birth to a son, the later Henry the Seventh. From very childhood the life of Henry had been a troubled one. His father died in the year of his birth; his uncle and guardian, Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, was driven from the realm on the fall of the House of Lancaster; and the boy himself, attainted at five years old, remained a prisoner till the restoration of Henry the Sixth by Lord Warwick. But Edward's fresh success drove him from the realm, and escaping to Brittany he was held there, half-guest, half-prisoner, by its Duke. The extinction of the direct Lancastrian line had given Henry a new importance. Edward the Fourth never ceased to strive for his surrender, and if the Breton Duke refused to give him up, his alliance with the English King was too valuable to be imperilled by suffering him to go free. The value of such a check on Richard was seen by Lewis of France; and his demands for Henry's surrender into his hands drove the Duke of Brittany, who was now influenced by a minister in Richard's pay, to seek for aid from England. In June the King sent a thousand archers to Brittany; but

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Richard's
reign.

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He found unexpected aid in the Duke of Buckingham, whose support had done much to put Richard on the throne. Though rewarded with numerous grants and the post of Constable, Buckingham's greed was still unsated; and on the refusal of his demand of the lands belonging to the earldom of Hereford the Duke lent his ear to the counsels of Margaret Beaufort, who had married his brother, Henry Stafford, but still remained true to the cause of her boy. Buckingham looked no doubt to the chance of fooling Yorkist and Lancastrian alike, and of pressing his own claims to the throne on Richard's fall. But he was in the hands of subtler plotters. Morton, the exiled Bishop of Ely, had founded a scheme of union on the disappearance of Edward the Fifth and his brother, who had been imprisoned in the Tower since Richard's accession to the throne, and were now believed to have been murdered by his orders. The death of the boys left their sister Elizabeth, who had taken sanctuary at Westminster with her mother, the heiress of Edward the Fourth; and the scheme of Morton was to unite the discontented Yorkists with what remained of the Lancastrian party by the marriage of Elizabeth with Henry Tudor. The Queen-mother and her kindred gave their consent to this plan, and a wide revolt was organized under Buckingham's leadership. In October 1483 the Woodvilles and their adherents rose in Wiltshire, Kent, and Berkshire, the Courtenays in Devon, while Buckingham marched to their support from Wales. Troubles in Brittany had at this moment freed Henry Tudor, and on the news of the rising he sailed with a strong fleet and five thousand soldiers on board. A proclamation of the new pretender announced to the nation what seems as yet to have been carefully hidden, the death of the princes in the Tower. But,

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bringing into this realm or selling by retail or otherwise of any manner of books, written or imprinted." His prohibition of the iniquitous seizure of goods before conviction of felony which had prevailed during Edward's reign, his liberation of the bondmen who still remained unenfranchised on the royal domain, and his religious foundations show Richard's keen anxiety to purchase a popularity in which the bloody opening of his reign might be forgotten.

It was doubtless the same wish to render his throne popular which led Richard to revive the schemes of a war with France. He had strongly remonstrated against his brother's withdrawal and alliance in 1475, and it must have been rather a suspicion of his warlike designs than any horror at the ruthlessness of his ambition which led Lewis the Eleventh on his death-bed to refuse to recognize his accession. At the close of Edward the Fourth's reign the alliance which had bound the two countries together was brought to an end by the ambition and faithlessness of the French King. The war between Lewis and Maximilian ended at the close of 1482 through the sudden death of Mary of Burgundy and the reluctance of the Flemish towns to own Maximilian's authority as guardian of her son, Philip, the heir of the Burgundian states. Lewis was able to conclude a treaty at Arras, by which Philip's sister, Margaret, was betrothed to the Dauphin Charles, and brought with her as dower the counties of Artois and Burgundy. By the treaty with England Charles was already betrothed to Edward's daughter, Elizabeth; and this open breach of treaty was followed by the cessation of the subsidy which had been punctually paid since 1475. France in fact had no more need of buying English neutrality. Galled as he was, Edward's death but a few months later hindered any open quarrel, but the refusal of Lewis to recognize Richard and his attempts to force from Brittany the surrender of Henry Tudor added to the estrangement of the two courts; and we can hardly wonder that on the death of the French King only a few

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months after his accession Richard seized the opportunity which the troubles at the French court afforded him. Charles the Eighth was a minor; and the control of power was disputed as of old between the Regent, Anne of Beaujeu, and the Duke of Orleans. Orleans entered into correspondence with Richard and Maximilian, whom Anne's policy was preventing from gaining the mastery over the Low Countries, and preparations were making for a coalition which would have again brought an English army and the young English King on to the soil of France. It was to provide against this danger that Anne had received Henry Tudor at the French court when the threat of delivering him up to Richard forced him to quit Brittany after the failure of his first expedition; and she met the new coalition by encouraging the Earl to renew his attack. Had Richard retained his popularity the attempt must have ended in a failure even more disastrous than before. But the news of the royal children's murder had slowly spread through the nation, and even the most pitiless shrank aghast before this crowning deed of blood. The pretence of a constitutional rule too was soon thrown off, and in the opening of 1485 a general irritation was caused by the levy of benevolences in defiance of the statute which had just been passed. The King felt himself safe; the consent of the Queen-mother to his contemplated marriage with her daughter Elizabeth appeared to secure him against any danger from the discontented Yorkists; and Henry, alone and in exile, seemed a small danger. Henry however had no sooner landed at Milford Haven than a wide conspiracy revealed itself. Lord Stanley had as yet stood foremost among Richard's adherents; he had supported him in the rising of 1483 and had been rewarded with Buckingham's post of Constable. His brother too stood high in the King's confidence. But Margaret Beaufort, again left a widow, wedded Lord Stanley; and turned her third marriage, as she had turned her second,

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to the profit of her boy. A pledge of support from her husband explains the haste with which Henry pressed forward to his encounter with the king. The treason however was skilfully veiled; and though defection after defection warned Richard of his danger as Henry moved against him, the Stanleys still remained by his side and held command of a large body of his forces. But the armies no sooner met on the twenty-second of August at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire than their treason was declared. The forces under Lord Stanley abandoned the King when the battle began; a second body of troops under the Earl of Northumberland drew off as it opened. In the crisis of the fight Sir William Stanley passed over to Henry's side. With a cry of "Treason! treason!" Richard flung himself into the thick of the battle, and in the fury of his despair he had already dashed the Lancastrian standard to the ground and hewed his way into the presence of his rival when he fell overpowered with numbers, and the crown which he had worn and which was found as the struggle ended lying near a hawthorn bush was placed on the head of the conqueror.

CHAPTER II.

THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

1485-1514.

STILL young, for he was hardly thirty when his victory at Bosworth placed him on the throne, the temper of Henry the Seventh seemed to promise the reign of a poetic dreamer rather than of a statesman. The spare form, the sallow face, the quick eye, lit now and then with a fire that told of his Celtic blood, the shy, solitary humour which was only broken by outbursts of pleasant converse or genial sarcasm, told of an inner concentration and enthusiasm; and to the last Henry's mind remained imaginative and adventurous. He dreamed of crusades, he dwelt with delight on the legends of Arthur which Caxton gave to the world in the year of his accession. His tastes were literary and artistic. He called foreign scholars to his court to serve as secretaries and historiographers; he trained his children in the highest culture of their day; he was a patron of the new printing press, a lover of books and of art. The chapel at Westminster which bears his name reflects his passion for architecture. But life gave Henry little leisure for dreams or culture. From the first he had to struggle for very existence against the dangers that beset him. A battle and treason had given him the throne; treason and a battle might dash him from it. His claim of blood was an uncertain and disputable one even by men of his own party. He stood

*Henry the
Seventh.*

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attainted by solemn Act of Parliament; and though the judges ruled that the possession of the crown cleared all attainst the stigma and peril remained. His victory had been a surprize; he could not trust the nobles; of fifty-two peers he dared summon only a part to the Parliament which assembled after his coronation and gave its recognition to his claim of the crown. The act made no mention of hereditary right, or of any right by conquest, but simply declared "that the inheritance of the crown should be, rest, remain; and abide in the most royal person of their sovereign Lord, King Henry the Seventh, and the heirs of his body lawfully ensuing." Such a declaration gave Henry a true Parliamentary title to his throne; and his consciousness of this was shown in a second act which assumed him to have been King since the death of Henry the Sixth and attainted Richard and his adherents as rebels and traitors. But such an act was too manifestly unjust to give real strength to his throne; it was in fact practically undone in 1495 when a new statute declared that no one should henceforth be attainted for serving a de facto king; and so insecure seemed Henry's title that no power acknowledged him as King save France and the Pope, and the support of France—gained as men believed by a pledge to abandon the English claims on Normandy and Guienne—was as perilous at home as it was useful abroad.

Revolt of
Simnel.

It was in vain that he carried out his promise to Morton and the Woodvilles by marrying Elizabeth of York; he had significantly delayed the marriage till he was owned as King in his own right, and a purely Lancastrian claim to the throne roused wrath in every Yorkist which no after match could allay. During the early years of his reign the country was troubled with local insurrections, some so obscure that they have escaped the notice of our chroniclers, some, like that of Lovel and of the Staffords, general and formidable. The turmoil within was quickened by encouragement from without. The

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Yorkist sympathies of the Earl of Kildare, the deputy of Ireland, offered a starting-point for a descent from the west; while the sister of Edward the Fourth, the Duchess Margaret of Burgundy, a fanatic in the cause of her house, was ready to aid any Yorkist attempt from Flanders. A trivial rising in 1486 proved to be the prelude of a vast conspiracy in the following year. The Earl of Warwick, the son of the Duke of Clarence and thus next male heir of the Yorkist line, had been secured by Henry as by Richard in the Tower; but in the opening of 1487 Lambert Simnel, a boy carefully trained for the purpose of this imposture, landed under his name in Ireland. The whole island espoused Simnel's cause, the Lord Deputy supported him, and he was soon joined by the Earl of Lincoln, John de la Pole, the son of a sister of Edward the Fourth by the Duke of Suffolk, and who on the death of Richard's son had been recognized by that sovereign as his heir. Edward's queen and the Woodvilles seem to have joined in the plot, and Margaret sent troops which enabled the pretender to land in Lancashire. But Henry was quick to meet the danger, and the impostor's defeat at Stoke near Newark proved fatal to the hopes of the Yorkists. Simnel was taken and made a scullion in the King's kitchen, Lincoln fell on the field.

Henry's
Govern-
ment.

The victory of Stoke set Henry free to turn to the inner government of his realm. He took up with a new vigour and fulness the policy of Edward the Fourth. Parliament was only summoned on rare and critical occasions. It was but twice convened during the last thirteen years of Henry's reign. The chief aim of the King was the accumulation of a treasure which should relieve him from the need of ever appealing for its aid. Subsidies granted for the support of wars which Henry evaded formed the base of a royal treasure which was swelled by the revival of dormant claims of the crown, by the exaction of fines for the breach of forgotten tenures, and by a host of petty extortions. Benevolences were again revived. A dilemma of Henry's

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minister, which received the name of "Morton's fork," extorted gifts to the exchequer from men who lived handsomely on the ground that their wealth was manifest, and from those who lived plainly on the plea that economy had made them wealthy. Still greater sums were drawn from those who were compromised in the revolts which chequered the King's rule. It was with his own hand that Henry endorsed the rolls of fines imposed after every insurrection. So successful were these efforts that at the end of his reign the King bequeathed a hoard of two millions to his successor. The same imitation of Edward's policy was seen in Henry's civil government. Broken as was the strength of the baronage, there still remained lords whom the new monarch watched with a jealous solicitude. Their power lay in the hosts of disorderly retainers who swarmed round their houses, ready to furnish a force in case of revolt, while in peace they became centres of outrage and defiance to the law. Edward had ordered the dissolution of these military households in his Statute of Liveries, and the statute was enforced by Henry with the utmost severity. On a visit to the Earl of Oxford, one of the most devoted adherents of the Lancastrian cause, the King found two long lines of liveried retainers drawn up to receive him. "I thank you for your good cheer, my Lord," said Henry as they parted, "but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight. My attorney must speak with you." The Earl was glad to escape with a fine of £10,000. It was with a special view to the suppression of this danger that Henry employed the criminal jurisdiction of the royal Council. The King in his Council had always asserted a right in the last resort to enforce justice and peace by dealing with offenders too strong to be dealt with by his ordinary courts. Henry systematized this occasional jurisdiction by appointing in 1486 a committee of his Council as a regular court, to which the place where it usually sat gave the name of the Court of Star Chamber. The King's aim was probably little more than a purpose to

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enforce order on the land by bringing the great nobles before his own judgement-seat; but the establishment of the court as a regular and no longer an exceptional tribunal, whose traditional powers were confirmed by Parliamentary statute, and where the absence of a jury cancelled the prisoner's right to be tried by his peers, furnished his son with an instrument of tyranny which laid justice at the feet of the monarchy.

In his foreign policy Henry like Edward clung to a system of peace. His aim was to keep England apart, independent of the two great continental powers which during the Wars of the Roses had made revolutions at their will. Peace indeed was what Henry needed, whether for the general welfare of the land, or for the building up of his own system of rule. Peace however was hard to win. The old quarrel with France seemed indeed at an end; for it was Henry's pledge of friendship which had bought the French aid that enabled him to mount the throne. But in England itself hatred of the French burned fiercely as ever; and the growth of the French monarchy in extent and power through the policy of Lewis the Eleventh, his extinction of the great feudatories, and the administrative centralization he introduced, made even the coolest English statesman look on it as a danger to the realm. Only Brittany broke the long stretch of French coast which fronted England; and the steady refusal of Edward the Fourth to suffer Lewis to attack the Duchy showed the English sense of its value. Under its new King however, Charles the Eighth, France showed her purpose of annexing Brittany. Henry contented himself for a while with sending a few volunteers to aid in resistance; but when the death of the Duke left Brittany and its heiress, Anne, at the mercy of the French King the country called at once for war. Henry was driven to find allies in the states which equally dreaded the French advance, in the house of Austria and in the new power of Spain, to call on Parliament for supplies, and to cross the Channel in 1492 with twenty-

War of
Britanny.

CHAP. II. five thousand men. But his allies failed him; a marriage of Charles with Anne gave the Duchy irretrievably to the French King; and troubles at home brought Henry to listen to terms of peace on payment of a heavy subsidy.

Henry and Ireland.

Both kings indeed were eager for peace. Charles was anxious to free his hands for the designs he was forming against Italy. What forced Henry to close the war was the appearance of a new pretender. At the opening of 1492, at the moment when the King was threatening a descent on the French coast, a youth calling himself Richard, Duke of York, landed suddenly in Ireland. His story of an escape from the Tower and of his bringing up in Portugal was accepted by a crowd of partizans; but he was soon called by Charles to France, and his presence there adroitly used to wring peace from the English King as the price of his abandonment. At the conclusion of peace the pretender found a new refuge with Duchess Margaret; his claims were recognized by the House of Austria and the King of Scots; while Henry, who declared the youth's true name to be Perkin Warbeck, weakened his cause by conflicting accounts of his origin and history. Fresh Yorkist plots sprang up in England. The Duchess gathered a fleet, Maximilian sent soldiers to the young claimant's aid, and in 1495 he sailed for England with a force as large as that which had followed Henry ten years before. But he found a different England. Though fierce outbreaks still took place in the north, the country at large had tasted the new sweets of order and firm government, and that reaction of feeling, that horror of civil wars, which gave their strength to the Tudors had already begun to show its force. The pretender's troops landed at Deal only to be seized by the country folk and hung as pirates. Their leader sailed on to Ireland. Here too however he found a new state of things. Since the recall of Richard and his army in 1399 English sovereignty over the island had dwindled to a shadow. For a hundred years the native chieftains

had ruled without check on one side the Pale, and the lords of the Pale had ruled with but little check on the other. But in 1494 Henry took the country in hand. Sir Edward Poynings, a tried soldier, was despatched as deputy to Ireland with troops at his back. English officers, English judges were quietly sent over. The lords of the Pale were scared by the seizure of their leader, the Earl of Kildare. The Parliament of the Pale was bridled by a statute passed at the Deputy's dictation; the famous Poynings' Act, by which it was forbidden to treat of any matters save those first approved of by the English King and his Council. It was this new Ireland that the pretender found when he appeared off its coast. He withdrew in despair, and Henry at once set about finishing his work. The time had not yet come when England was strong enough to hold Ireland by her own strength. For a while the Lords of the Pale must still serve as the English garrison against the unconquered Irish, and Henry called his prisoner Kildare to his presence. "All Ireland cannot rule this man," grumbled his ministers. "Then shall he rule all Ireland," laughed the King, and Kildare returned as Lord Deputy to hold the country loyally in Henry's name.

The same political forecast, winning from very danger the elements of future security, was seen in the King's dealings with Scotland. From the moment when England finally abandoned the fruitless effort to subdue it the story of Scotland had been a miserable one. Whatever peace might be concluded, a sleepless dread of the old danger from the south tied the country to an alliance with France, and this alliance dragged it into the vortex of the Hundred Years' War. But after the final defeat and capture of David on the field of Neville's Cross the struggle died down on both sides into marauding forays and battles, like those of Otterburn and Homildon Hill, in which alternate victories were won by the feudal lords of the Scotch or English border. The ballad of "Chevy

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Henry and Scotland.

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Margaret
Tudor.

A great name at last broke the line of the Scottish kings. Schooled by a long captivity in England, James the First returned to his realm in 1424 to be the ablest of her rulers as he was the first of her poets. In the twelve years of a wonderful reign justice and order were restored for the while, the Scotch Parliament organized, the clans of the Highlands assailed in their own fastnesses and reduced to swear fealty to the "Saxon" king. James turned to assail the great houses; but feudal violence was still too strong for the hand of the law, and a band of ruffians who burst into his chamber left the King lifeless with sixteen stabs in his body. His death in 1437 was the signal for a struggle between the House of Douglas and the Crown which lasted through half a century. Order however crept gradually in; the exile of the

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Douglases left the Scottish monarchs supreme in the Lowlands; while their dominion over the Highlands was secured by the ruin of the Lords of the Isles. But in its outer policy the country still followed in the wake of France; every quarrel between French King and English King brought danger with it on the Scottish border; and the war of Brittany at once set James the Fourth among Henry's foes. James welcomed the fugitive pretender at his court after his failure in Ireland, wedded him to his cousin, and in 1497 marched with him to the south. Not a man however greeted the Yorkist claimant, the country mustered to fight him; and an outbreak among his nobles, many of whom Henry had in his pay, called the Scot-King back again. Abandonment of the pretender was the first provision of peace between the two countries. Forced to quit Scotland the youth threw himself on the Cornish coast, drawn there by a revolt in June, only two months before his landing, which had been stirred up by the heavy taxation for the Scotch war, and in which a force of Cornishmen had actually pushed upon London and only been dispersed by the King's artillery on Blackheath. His temper however shrank from any real encounter; and though he succeeded in raising a body of Cornishmen and marched on Taunton, at the approach of the royal forces he fled from his army, took sanctuary at Beaulieu, and surrendered on promise of life. But the close of this danger made no break in Henry's policy of winning Scotland to a new attitude towards his realm. The lure to James was the hand of the English King's daughter, Margaret Tudor. For five years the negotiations dragged wearily along. The bitter hate of the two peoples blocked the way, and even Henry's ministers objected that the English crown might be made by the match the heritage of a Scottish king. "Then," they said "Scotland will annex England." "No," said the King with shrewd sense; "in such a case England would annex Scotland, for the greater always draws to it the less." His

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The
Spanish
Marriage.

steady pressure at last won the day. In 1502 the marriage treaty with the Scot-King was formally concluded; and quiet, as Henry trusted, secured in the north.

The marriage of Margaret was to bring the House of Stuart at an after time to the English throne. But results as momentous and far more immediate followed on the marriage of Henry's sons. From the outset of his reign Henry had been driven to seek the friendship and alliance of Spain. Though his policy to the last remained one of peace, yet the acquisition of Brittany forced him to guard against attack from France and the mastery of the Channel which the possession of the Breton ports was likely to give to the French fleet. The same dread of French attack drew Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabel of Castile, whose marriage was building up the new monarchy of Spain, to the side of the English King; and only a few years after his accession they offered the hand of their daughter Catharine for his eldest son. But the invasion of Italy by Charles the Eighth drew French ambition to a distant strife, and once delivered from the pressure of immediate danger Henry held warily back from a close connexion with the Spanish realms which might have involved him in continental wars. It was not till 1501 that the marriage-treaty was really carried out. The Low Countries had now passed to the son of Mary of Burgundy by her husband Maximilian, the Austrian Archduke Philip. The Yorkist sympathies of the Duchess Margaret were shared by Philip, and Flanders had till now been the starting-point of the pretenders who had threatened Henry's crown. But Philip's marriage with Juana, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabel, bound him to the cause of Spain, and it was to secure his throne by winning Philip's alliance, as well as to gain in the friendship of the Low Countries a fresh check upon French attack, that Henry yielded to Ferdinand's renewed demand for the union of Arthur and Catharine. The match was made in blood. Henry's own temper was merciful and even generous; he punished

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rebellion for the most part by fines rather than bloodshed, and he had been content to imprison or degrade his rivals. But the Spanish ruthlessness would see no living claimant left to endanger Catharine's throne, and Perkin Warbeck and the Earl of Warwick were put to death on a charge of conspiracy before the landing of the bride.

Catharine however was widow almost as soon as wife, for only three months after his wedding Arthur sickened and died. But a contest with France for Southern Italy, which Ferdinand claimed as king of Aragon, now made the friendship of England more precious than ever to the Spanish sovereigns; and Isabel soon pressed for her daughter's union with the King's second son, Henry, whom his brother's death left heir to the throne. Strange as was such a proposal of marriage with a husband's brother, in his anxiety to avoid a breach with Spain the King suffered Henry to be betrothed to Catharine, and threw the burthen of decision on Rome. As he expected, Julius the Second declared that if the first marriage had been completed to allow the second was beyond even the Papal power. But the victories of Spain in Southern Italy enabled Isabel to put fresh pressure on the Pope, and on a denial being given of the consummation of the earlier marriage Julius was brought to sign a bull legitimating, even in case of such a consummation, the later one. Henry however still shrank from any real union. His aim was neither to complete the marriage, which would have alienated France, nor to wholly break it off and so alienate Spain. A balanced position between the two battling powers allowed him to remain at peace, to maintain an independent policy, and to pursue his system of home-government. He met the bull therefore by compelling his son to enter a secret protest against the validity of his betrothal; and Catharine remained through the later years of his reign at the English court betrothed but unmarried, sick with love-longing and baffled pride.

But great as were the issues of Henry's policy, it shrinks

CHAP. II. into littleness if we turn from it to the weighty movements which were now stirring the minds of men. The world was passing through changes more momentous than any it had witnessed since the victory of Christianity and the fall of the Roman Empire. Its physical bounds were suddenly enlarged. The discoveries of Copernicus revealed to man the secret of the universe. Portuguese mariners doubled the Cape of Good Hope and anchored their merchant fleets in the harbours of India. Columbus crossed the untraversed ocean to add a New World to the Old. Sebastian Cabot, starting from the port of Bristol, threaded his way among the icebergs of Labrador. This sudden contact with new lands, new faiths, new races of men quickened the slumbering intelligence of Europe into a strange curiosity. The first book of voyages that told of the Western World, the travels of Amerigo Vespucci, were soon "in every body's hands." The "Utopia" of More, in its wide range of speculation on every subject of human thought and action, tells us how roughly and utterly the narrowness and limitation of human life had been broken up. At the very hour when the intellectual energy of the Middle Ages had sunk into exhaustion the capture of Constantinople by the Turks and the flight of its Greek scholars to the shores of Italy opened anew the science and literature of an older world. The exiled Greek scholars were welcomed in Italy; and Florence, so long the home of freedom and of art, became the home of an intellectual Revival. The poetry of Homer, the drama of Sophocles, the philosophy of Aristotle and of Plato woke again to life beneath the shadow of the mighty dome with which Brunelleschi had just crowned the City by the Arno. All the restless energy which Florence had so long thrown into the cause of liberty she flung, now that her liberty was reft from her, into the cause of letters. The galleys of her merchants brought back manuscripts from the East as the most precious portion of their freight. In the palaces of her nobles fragments of classic sculpture ranged them-

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selves beneath the frescoes of Ghirlandajo. The recovery of a treatise of Cicero's or a tract of Sallust's from the dust of a monastic library was welcomed by the group of statesmen and artists who gathered in the Rucellai gardens with a thrill of enthusiasm. Foreign scholars soon flocked over the Alps to learn Greek, the key of the new knowledge, from the Florentine teachers. Grocyn, a fellow of New College, was perhaps the first Englishman who studied under the Greek exile, Chancondylas; and the Greek lectures which he delivered in Oxford on his return in 1491 mark the opening of a new period in our history. Physical as well as literary activity awoke with the rediscovery of the teachers of Greece; and the continuous progress of English science may be dated from the day when Linacre, another Oxford student, returned from the lectures of the Florentine Politian to revive the older tradition of medicine by his translation of Galen.

But from the first it was manifest that the revival of letters would take a tone in England very different from the tone it had taken in Italy, a tone less literary, less largely human, but more moral, more religious, more practical in its bearings both upon society and politics. The awakening of a rational Christianity, whether in England or in the Teutonic world at large, begins with the Italian studies of John Colet; and the vigour and earnestness of Colet were the best proof of the strength with which the new movement was to affect English religion. He came back to Oxford utterly untouched by the Platonic mysticism or the semi-serious infidelity which characterized the group of scholars round Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was hardly more influenced by their literary enthusiasm. The knowledge of Greek seems to have had one almost exclusive end for him, and this was a religious end. Greek was the key by which he could unlock the Gospels and the New Testament, and in these he thought that he could find a new religious standing-ground. It was this resolve of Colet to throw aside the traditional dogmas of his day and

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to discover a rational and practical religion in the Gospels themselves which gave its peculiar stamp to the theology of the Renaissance. His faith stood simply on a vivid realization of the person of Christ. In the prominence which such a view gave to the moral life, in his free criticism of the earlier Scriptures, in his tendency to simple forms of doctrine and confessions of faith, Colet struck the keynote of a mode of religious thought as strongly in contrast with that of the later Reformation as with that of Catholicism itself. The allegorical and mystical theology on which the Middle Ages had spent their intellectual vigour to such little purpose fell before his rejection of all but the historical and grammatical sense of the Biblical text. In his lectures on the Romans we find hardly a single quotation from the Fathers or the scholastic teachers. The great fabric of belief built up by the mediæval doctors seemed to him simply "the corruptions of the Schoolmen." In the life and sayings of its Founder he saw a simple and rational Christianity, whose fittest expression was the Apostles' creed. "About the rest," he said with characteristic impatience, "let divines dispute as they will." Of his attitude towards the coarser aspects of the current religion his behaviour at a later time before the famous shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury gives us a rough indication. As the blaze of its jewels, its costly sculptures, its elaborate metal-work burst on Colet's view, he suggested with bitter irony that a saint so lavish to the poor in his lifetime would certainly prefer that they should possess the wealth heaped round him since his death. With petulant disgust he rejected the rags of the martyr which were offered for his adoration and the shoe which was offered for his kiss. The earnestness, the religious zeal, the very impatience and want of sympathy with the past which we see in every word and act of the man burst out in the lectures on St. Paul's Epistles which he delivered at Oxford in 1496. Even to the most critical among his hearers he seemed "like one

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inspired, raised in voice, eye, his whole countenance and mien, out of himself."

Severe as was the outer life of the new teacher, a severity marked by his plain black robe and the frugal table which he preserved amidst his later dignities, his lively conversation, his frank simplicity, the purity and nobleness of his life, even the keen outbursts of his troublesome temper, endeared him to a group of scholars, foremost among whom stood Erasmus and Thomas More. "Greece has crossed the Alps," cried the exiled Argyropoulos on hearing a translation of Thucydides by the German Reuchlin; but the glory, whether of Reuchlin or of the Teutonic scholars who followed him, was soon eclipsed by that of Erasmus. His enormous industry, the vast store of classical learning which he gradually accumulated, Erasmus shared with others of his day. In patristic study he may have stood beneath Luther; in originality and profoundness of thought he was certainly inferior to More. His theology, though he made a greater mark on the world by it than even by his scholarship, he derived almost without change from Colet. But his combination of vast learning with keen observation, of acuteness of remark with a lively fancy, of genial wit with a perfect good sense—his union of as sincere a piety and as profound a zeal for rational religion as Colet's with a dispassionate fairness towards older faiths, a large love of secular culture, and a genial freedom and play of mind—this union was his own, and it was through this that Erasmus embodied for the Teutonic peoples the quickening influence of the New Learning during the long scholar-life which began at Paris and ended amidst sorrow and darkness at Basle. At the time of Colet's return from Italy Erasmus was young and comparatively unknown, but the chivalrous enthusiasm of the new movement breaks out in his letters from Paris, whither he had wandered as a scholar. "I have given up my whole soul to Greek learning," he writes, "and as soon as I get any money I

CHAP. II. shall buy Greek books—and then I shall buy some clothes.” It was in despair of reaching Italy that the young scholar made his way in 1499 to Oxford, as the one place on this side the Alps where he would be enabled through the teaching of Grocyn to acquire a knowledge of Greek. But he had no sooner arrived there than all feeling of regret vanished away. “I have found in Oxford,” he writes, “so much polish and learning that now I hardly care about going to Italy at all, save for the sake of having been there. When I listen to my friend Colet it seems like listening to Plato himself. Who does not wonder at the wide range of Grocyn’s knowledge? What can be more searching, deep, and refined than the judgement of Linacre? When did Nature mould a temper more gentle, endearing, and happy than the temper of Thomas More?”

*Revival
of
Letters.*

But the new movement was far from being bounded by the walls of Oxford. The printing press was making letters the common property of all. In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century ten thousand editions of books and pamphlets are said to have been published throughout Europe, the most important half of them of course in Italy. All the Latin authors were accessible to every student before the century closed. Almost all the more valuable authors of Greece were published in the twenty years that followed. The profound influence of this burst of the two great classic literatures on the world at once made itself felt. “For the first time,” to use the picturesque phrase of M. Taine, “men opened their eyes and saw.” The human mind seemed to gather new energies at the sight of the vast field which opened before it. It attacked every province of knowledge, and in a few years it transformed all. Experimental science, the science of philology, the science of politics, the critical investigation of religious truth, all took their origin from this Renaissance—this “New Birth” of the world. Art, if it lost much in purity and propriety, gained in scope and in the fearlessness of its love of Nature. Literature, if

crushed for the moment by the overpowering attraction of the great models of Greece and Rome, revived with a grandeur of form, a large spirit of humanity, such as it has never known since their day. In England the influence of the new movement extended far beyond the little group in which it had a few years before seemed concentrated. The great churchmen became its patrons. Langton, Bishop of Winchester, took delight in examining the young scholars of his episcopal family every evening, and sent all the most promising of them to study across the Alps. Learning found a yet warmer friend in the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Immersed as Archbishop Warham was in the business of the state, he was no mere politician. The eulogies which Erasmus lavished on him while he lived, his praises of the Primate’s learning, of his ability in business, his pleasant humour, his modesty, his fidelity to friends, may pass for what eulogies of living men are commonly worth. But it is difficult to doubt the sincerity of the glowing picture which he drew of him when death had destroyed all interest in mere adulation. The letters indeed which passed between the great churchman and the wandering scholar, the quiet, simple-hearted grace which amidst constant instances of munificence preserved the perfect equality of literary friendship, the enlightened piety to which Erasmus could address the noble words of his preface to St. Jerome, confirm the judgement of every good man of Warham’s day. The Archbishop’s life was a simple one; and an hour’s pleasant reading, a quiet chat with some learned new comer, alone broke the endless round of civil and ecclesiastical business. Few men realized so thoroughly as Warham the new conception of an intellectual and moral equality before which the old social distinctions of the world were to vanish away. His favourite relaxation was to sup among a group of scholarly visitors, enjoying their fun and retorting with fun of his own. Colet, who had now become Dean of

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St. Pauls and whose sermons were stirring all London, might often be seen with Grocyn and Linacre at the Primate's board. There too might probably have been seen Thomas More, who, young as he was, was already famous through his lectures at St. Lawrence on "The City of God." But the scholar-world found more than supper or fun at the Primate's board. His purse was ever open to relieve their poverty. "Had I found such a patron in my youth," Erasmus wrote long after, "I too might have been counted among the fortunate ones." It was with Grocyn that Erasmus on a second visit to England rowed up the river to Warham's board at Lambeth, and in spite of an unpromising beginning the acquaintance turned out wonderfully well. The Primate loved him, Erasmus wrote home, as if he were his father or his brother, and his generosity surpassed that of all his friends. He offered him a sinecure, and when he declined it he bestowed on him a pension of a hundred crowns a year. When Erasmus wandered to Paris it was Warham's invitation which recalled him to England. When the rest of his patrons left him to starve on the sour beer of Cambridge it was Warham who sent him fifty angels. "I wish there were thirty legions of them," the Primate puns in his good-humoured way.

Henry the
Eighth.

Real however as this progress was, the group of scholars who represented the New Learning in England still remained a little one through the reign of Henry the Seventh. But the King's death in 1509 wholly changed their position. A "New Order," to use their own enthusiastic phrase, dawned on them in the accession of his son. Henry the Eighth had hardly completed his eighteenth year when he mounted the throne; but his manly beauty, his bodily vigour, and skill in arms, seemed matched by a frank and generous temper and a nobleness of political aims. Pole, his bitterest enemy, owned in later days that at the beginning of his reign Henry's nature was one "from which all excellent things might have been hoped." Already in stature and strength a king among his fellows,

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taller than any, bigger than any, a mighty wrestler, a mighty hunter, an archer of the best, a knight who bore down rider after rider in the tourney, the young monarch combined with this bodily lordliness a largeness and versatility of mind which was to be the special characteristic of the age that had begun. His fine voice, his love of music, his skill on lute or organ, the taste for poetry that made him delight in Surrey's verse, the taste for art which made him delight in Holbein's canvas, left room for tendencies of a more practical sort, for dabbling in medicine, or for a real skill in shipbuilding. There was a popular fibre in Henry's nature which made him seek throughout his reign the love of his people; and at its outset he gave promise of a more popular system of government by checking the extortion which had been practised under colour of enforcing forgotten laws, and by bringing his father's financial ministers, Empson and Dudley, to trial on a charge of treason. His sympathies were known to be heartily with the New Learning; he was a clever linguist, he had a taste that never left him for theological study, he was a fair scholar. Even as a boy of nine he had roused by his wit and attainments the wonder of Erasmus, and now that he mounted the throne the great scholar hurried back to England to pour out his exultation in the "Praise of Folly," a song of triumph over the old world of ignorance and bigotry that was to vanish away before the light and knowledge of the new reign. Folly in his amusing little book mounts a pulpit in cap and bells, and pelts with her satire the absurdities of the world around her, the superstition of the monk, the pedantry of the grammarian, the dogmatism of the doctors of the schools, the selfishness and tyranny of Kings.

The irony of Erasmus was backed by the earnest effort of Colet. He seized the opportunity to commence the work of educational reform by devoting in 1510 his private fortune to the foundation of a Grammar School beside St. Pauls. The bent of its founder's mind was shown by the

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image of the Child Jesus over the master's chair with the words "Hear ye Him" graven beneath it. "Lift up your little white hands for me," wrote the Dean to his scholars in words which prove the tenderness that lay beneath the stern outer seeming of the man,—“for me which prayeth for you to God.” All the educational designs of the reformers were carried out in the new foundation. The old methods of instruction were superseded by fresh grammars composed by Erasmus and other scholars for its use. Lilly, an Oxford student who had studied Greek in the East, was placed at its head. The injunctions of the founder aimed at the union of rational religion with sound learning, at the exclusion of the scholastic logic, and at the steady diffusion of the two classical literatures. The more bigoted of the clergy were quick to take alarm. "No wonder," More wrote to the Dean, "your school raises a storm, for it is like the wooden horse in which armed Greeks were hidden for the ruin of barbarous Troy." But the cry of alarm passed helplessly away. Not only did the study of Greek creep gradually into the schools which existed, but the example of Colet was followed by a crowd of imitators. More grammar schools, it has been said, were founded in the latter years of Henry than in the three centuries before. The impulse only grew the stronger as the direct influence of the New Learning passed away. The grammar schools of Edward the Sixth and of Elizabeth, in a word the system of middle-class education which by the close of the century had changed the very face of England, were the outcome of Colet's foundation of St. Pauls.

The
Universi-
ties.

But the "armed Greeks" of More's apologue found a yet wider field in the reform of the higher education of the country. On the Universities the influence of the New Learning was like a passing from death to life. Erasmus gives us a picture of what happened in 1516 at Cambridge where he was himself for a time a teacher of Greek. "Scarcely thirty years ago nothing was taught

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here but the *Parva Logicalia*, Alexander, those antiquated exercises from Aristotle, and the *Questiones* of Scotus. As time went on better studies were added, mathematics, a new, or at any rate a renovated, Aristotle, and a knowledge of Greek literature. What has been the result? The University is now so flourishing that it can compete with the best universities of the age." William Latimer and Croke returned from Italy and carried on the work of Erasmus at Cambridge, where Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, himself one of the foremost scholars of the new movement, lent it his powerful support. At Oxford the Revival met with a fiercer opposition. The contest took the form of boyish frays, in which the youthful partizans and opponents of the New Learning took sides as Greeks and Trojans. The young King himself had to summon one of its fiercest enemies to Woodstock, and to impose silence on the tirades which were delivered from the University pulpit. The preacher alleged that he was carried away by the Spirit. "Yes," retorted the King, "by the spirit, not of wisdom, but of folly." But even at Oxford the contest was soon at an end. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, established the first Greek lecture there in his new college of Corpus Christi, and a Professorship of Greek was at a later time established by the Crown. "The students," wrote an eye-witness in 1520, "rush to Greek letters, they endure watching, fasting, toil, and hunger in the pursuit of them." The work was crowned at last by the munificent foundation of Cardinal College, to share in whose teaching Wolsey invited the most eminent of the living scholars of Europe, and for whose library he promised to obtain copies of all the manuscripts in the Vatican.

From the reform of education the New Learning pressed on to the reform of the Church. It was by Warham's commission that Colet was enabled in 1512 to address the Convocation of the Clergy in words which set before them with unsparing severity the religious ideal of the new movement. "Would that for once," burst forth the fiery

Church
Reform.

CHAP. II. preacher, "you would remember your name and profession and take thought for the reformation of the Church! Never was it more necessary, and never did the state of the Church need more vigorous endeavours." "We are troubled with heretics," he went on, "but no heresy of theirs is so fatal to us and to the people at large as the vicious and depraved lives of the clergy. That is the worst heresy of all." It was the reform of the bishops that must precede that of the clergy, the reform of the clergy that would lead to a general revival of religion in the people at large. The accumulation of benefices, the luxury and worldliness of the priesthood, must be abandoned. The prelates ought to be busy preachers, to forsake the Court and labour in their own dioceses. Care should be taken for the ordination and promotion of worthy ministers, residence should be enforced, the low standard of clerical morality should be raised. It is plain that the men of the New Learning looked forward, not to a reform of doctrine but to a reform of life, not to a revolution which should sweep away the older superstitions which they despised but to a regeneration of spiritual feeling before which these superstitions would inevitably fade away. Colet was soon charged with heresy by the Bishop of London. Warham however protected him, and Henry to whom the Dean was denounced bade him go boldly on. "Let every man have his own doctor," said the young King after a long interview, "but this man is the doctor for me!"

*Henry's
Temper.*

But for the success of the new reform, a reform which could only be wrought out by the tranquil spread of knowledge and the gradual enlightenment of the human conscience, the one thing needful was peace; and peace was already vanishing away. Splendid as were the gifts with which Nature had endowed Henry the Eighth, there lay beneath them all a boundless selfishness. "He is a prince," said Wolsey as he lay dying, "of a most royal courage; sooner than miss any part of his will he will endanger one

half of his kingdom, and I do assure you I have often kneeled to him, sometimes for three hours together, to persuade him from his appetite and could not prevail." It was this personal will and appetite that was in Henry the Eighth to shape the very course of English history, to override the highest interests of the state, to trample under foot the wisest counsels, to crush with the blind ingratitude of fate the servants who opposed it. Even Wolsey, while he recoiled from the monstrous form which had revealed itself, could hardly have dreamed of the work which that royal courage and yet more royal appetite was to accomplish in the years to come. As yet however Henry was far from having reached the height of self-assertion which bowed all constitutional law and even the religion of his realm beneath his personal will. But one of the earliest acts of his reign gave an earnest of the part which the new strength of the crown was to enable an English king to play. Through the later years of Henry the Seventh Catharine of Aragon had been recognized at the English court simply as Arthur's widow and Princess Dowager of Wales. Her betrothal to Prince Henry was looked upon as cancelled by his protest, and though the King was cautious not to break openly with Spain by sending her home, he was resolute not to suffer a marriage which would bring a break with France and give Ferdinand an opportunity of dragging England into the strife between the two great powers of the west.

But with the young King's accession this policy of cautious isolation was at once put aside. There were grave political reasons indeed for the quick resolve which bore down the opposition of counsellors like Warham. As cool a head as that of Henry the Seventh was needed to watch without panic the rapid march of French greatness. In mere extent France had grown with a startling rapidity since the close of her long strife with England. Guienne had fallen to Charles the Seventh. Provence, Rousillon, and the Duchy of Burgundy had

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successively swelled the realm of Lewis the Eleventh. Brittany had been added to that of Charles the Eighth. From Calais to Bayonne, from the Jura to the Channel, stretched a wide and highly organized realm, whose disciplined army and unrivalled artillery lifted it high above its neighbours in force of war. The efficiency of its army was seen in the sudden invasion and conquest of Italy while England was busy with the pretended Duke of York. The passage of the Alps by Charles the Eighth shook the whole political structure of Europe. In wealth, in political repute, in arms, in letters, in arts, Italy at this moment stood foremost among the peoples of Western Christendom, and the mastery which Charles won over it at a single blow lifted France at once above the states around her. Twice repulsed from Naples, she remained under the successor of Charles, Lewis the Twelfth, mistress of the Duchy of Milan and of the bulk of northern Italy; the princes and republics of central Italy grouped themselves about her; and at the close of Henry the Seventh's reign the ruin of Venice in the League of Cambray crushed the last Italian state which could oppose her designs on the whole peninsula. It was this new and mighty power, a France that stretched from the Atlantic to the Mincio, that fronted the young King at his accession and startled him from his father's attitude of isolation. He sought Ferdinand's alliance none the less that it meant war, for his temper was haughty and adventurous, his pride dwelt on the older claims of England to Normandy and Guienne, and his devotion to the papacy drew him to listen to the cry of Julius the Second and to long like a crusader to free Rome from the French pressure. Nor was it of less moment to a will such as the young King's that Catharine's passionate love for him had roused as ardent a love in return.

Ferdinand
of
Aragon.

Two months therefore after his accession the Infanta became the wife of Henry the Eighth. The influence of the King of Aragon became all powerful in the English council chamber. Catharine spoke of her husband and

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herself as Ferdinand's subjects. The young King wrote that he would obey Ferdinand as he had obeyed his own father. His obedience was soon to be tested. Ferdinand seized on his new ally as a pawn in the great game which he was playing on the European chess-board, a game which left its traces on the political and religious map of Europe for centuries after him. It was not without good ground that Henry the Seventh faced so coolly the menacing growth of France. He saw what his son failed to see, that the cool, wary King of Aragon was building up as quickly a power which was great enough to cope with it, and that grow as the two rivals might they were matched too evenly to render England's position a really dangerous one. While the French Kings aimed at the aggrandizement of a country, Ferdinand aimed at the aggrandizement of a House. Through the marriage of their daughter and heiress Juana with the son of the Emperor Maximilian, the Archduke Philip, the blood of Ferdinand and Isabel had merged in that of the House of Austria, and the aim of Ferdinand was nothing less than to give to the Austrian House the whole world of the west. Charles of Austria, the issue of Philip's marriage, had been destined from his birth by both his grandfathers, Maximilian and Ferdinand, to succeed to the Empire; Franche Comté and the state built up by the Burgundian Dukes in the Netherlands had already passed into his hands at the death of his father; the madness of his mother left him next heir of Castille; the death of Ferdinand would bring him Aragon and the dominion of the Kings of Aragon in southern Italy; that of Maximilian would add the Archduchy of Austria, with the dependencies in the south and its hopes of increase by the winning through marriage of the realms of Bohemia and Hungary. A share in the Austrian Archduchy indeed belonged to Charles's brother, the Archduke Ferdinand; but a kingdom in northern Italy would at once compensate Ferdinand for his abandonment of this

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heritage and extend the Austrian supremacy over the Peninsula, for Rome and central Italy would be helpless in the grasp of the power which ruled at both Naples and Milan. A war alone could drive France from the Milanese, but such a war might be waged by a league of European powers which would remain as a check upon France, should she attempt to hinder this vast union of states in the hand of Charles or to wrest from him the Imperial Crown. Such a league, the Holy League as it was called from the accession to it of the Pope, Ferdinand was enabled to form at the close of 1511 by the kinship of the Emperor, the desire of Venice and Julius the Second to free Italy from the stranger, and the warlike temper of Henry the Eighth.

Dreams of new Creçys and Agincourts roused the ardour of the young King; and the campaign of 1512 opened with his avowal of the old claims on his "heritage of France." But the subtle intriguer in whose hands he lay pushed steadily to his own great ends. The League drove the French from the Milanese. An English army which landed under the Marquis of Dorset at Fontarabia to attack Guienne found itself used as a covering force to shield Ferdinand's seizure of Navarre, the one road through which France could attack his grandson's heritage of Spain. The troops mutinied and sailed home; Scotland, roused again by the danger of France, threatened invasion; the world scoffed at Englishmen as useless for war. Henry's spirit however rose with the need. In 1513 he landed in person in the north of France, and a sudden rout of the French cavalry in an engagement near Guinegate, which received from its bloodless character the name of the Battle of the Spurs, gave him the fortresses of Terouenne and Tournay. A victory yet more decisive awaited his arms at home. A Scotch army crossed the border, with James the Fourth at its head; but on the ninth of September it was met by an English force under the Earl of Surrey at Flodden in Northumberland. James "fell near his banner," and his

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army was driven off the field with heavy loss. Flushed with this new glory, the young King was resolute to continue the war when in the opening of 1514 he found himself left alone by the dissolution of the League. Ferdinand had gained his ends, and had no mind to fight longer simply to realize the dreams of his son-in-law. Henry had indeed gained much. The might of France was broken. The Papacy was restored to freedom. England had again figured as a great power in Europe. But the millions left by his father were exhausted, his subjects had been drained by repeated subsidies, and, furious as he was at the treachery of his Spanish ally, Henry was driven to conclude a peace.

To the hopes of the New Learning this sudden outbreak of the spirit of war, this change of the monarch from whom they had looked for a "new order" into a vulgar conqueror, proved a bitter disappointment. Colet thundered from the pulpit of St. Pauls that "an unjust peace is better than the justest war," and protested that "when men out of hatred and ambition fight with and destroy one another, they fight under the banner, not of Christ, but of the Devil." Erasmus quitted Cambridge with a bitter satire against the "madness" around him. "It is the people," he said, in words which must have startled his age,—"it is the people who build cities, while the madness of princes destroys them." The sovereigns of his time appeared to him like ravenous birds pouncing with beak and claw on the hard-won wealth and knowledge of mankind. "Kings who are scarcely men," he exclaimed in bitter irony, "are called 'divine'; they are 'invincible' though they fly from every battle-field; 'serene' though they turn the world upside down in a storm of war; 'illustrious' though they grovel in ignorance of all that is noble; 'Catholic' though they follow anything rather than Christ. Of all birds the Eagle alone has seemed to wise men the type of royalty, a bird neither beautiful nor musical nor good for food, but murderous, greedy, hateful to all, the curse of all, and with

CHAP. II. its great powers of doing harm only surpassed by its desire to do it." It was the first time in modern history that religion had formally dissociated itself from the ambition of princes and the horrors of war, or that the new spirit of criticism had ventured not only to question but to deny what had till then seemed the primary truths of political order.

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The Jerome of Erasmus.

But the indignation of the New Learning was diverted to more practical ends by the sudden peace. However he had disappointed its hopes, Henry still remained its friend. Through all the changes of his terrible career his home was a home of letters. His boy, Edward the Sixth, was a fair scholar in both the classical languages. His daughter Mary wrote good Latin letters. Elizabeth began every day with an hour's reading in the Greek Testament, the tragedies of Sophocles, or the orations of Demosthenes. The ladies of the court caught the royal fashion and were found poring over the pages of Plato. Widely as Henry's ministers differed from each other, they all agreed in sharing and fostering the culture around them. The panic of the scholar-group therefore soon passed away. Colet toiled on with his educational efforts; Erasmus forwarded to England the works which English liberality was enabling him to produce abroad. Warham extended to him as generous an aid as the protection he had afforded to Colet. His edition of the works of St. Jerome had been begun under the Primate's encouragement during the great scholar's residence at Cambridge, and it appeared with a dedication to the Archbishop on its title-page. That Erasmus could find protection in Warham's name for a work which boldly recalled Christendom to the path of sound Biblical criticism, that he could address him in words so outspoken as those of his preface, shows how fully the Primate sympathized with the highest efforts of the New Learning. Nowhere had the spirit of enquiry so firmly set itself against the claims of authority. "Synods and decrees, and even councils," wrote Erasmus, "are by

no means in my judgement the fittest modes of repressing error, unless truth depend simply on authority. But on the contrary, the more dogmas there are, the more fruitful is the ground in producing heresies. Never was the Christian faith purer or more undefiled than when the world was content with a single creed, and that the shortest creed we have." It is touching even now to listen to such an appeal of reason and of culture against the tide of dogmatism which was soon to flood Christendom with Augsburg Confessions and Creeds of Pope Pius and Westminster Catechisms and Thirty-nine Articles.

But the principles which Erasmus urged in his "Jerome" were urged with far greater clearness and force in a work that laid the foundation of the future Reformation, the edition of the Greek Testament on which he had been engaged at Cambridge and whose production was almost wholly due to the encouragement and assistance he received from English scholars. In itself the book was a bold defiance of theological tradition. It set aside the Latin version of the Vulgate which had secured universal acceptance in the Church. Its method of interpretation was based, not on received dogmas, but on the literal meaning of the text. Its real end was the end at which Colet had aimed in his Oxford lectures. Erasmus desired to set Christ himself in the place of the Church, to recall men from the teaching of Christian theologians to the teaching of the Founder of Christianity. The whole value of the Gospels to him lay in the vividness with which they brought home to their readers the personal impression of Christ himself. "Were we to have seen him with our own eyes, we should not have so intimate a knowledge as they give us of Christ, speaking, healing, dying, rising again, as it were in our very presence." All the superstitions of mediæval worship faded away in the light of this personal worship of Christ. "If the footprints of Christ are shown us in any place, we kneel down and adore them. Why do we not rather venerate the living and breathing picture of him in these

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books? We deck statues of wood and stone with gold and gems for the love of Christ. Yet they only profess to represent to us the outer form of his body, while these books present us with a living picture of his holy mind." In the same way the actual teaching of Christ was made to supersede the mysterious dogmas of the older ecclesiastical teaching. "As though Christ taught such subtleties," burst out Erasmus: "subtleties that can scarcely be understood even by a few theologians—or as though the strength of the Christian religion consisted in man's ignorance of it! It may be the safer course," he goes on with characteristic irony, "to conceal the state mysteries of kings, but Christ desired his mysteries to be spread abroad as openly as was possible." In the diffusion, in the universal knowledge of the teaching of Christ the foundation of a reformed Christianity had still, he urged, to be laid. With the tacit approval of the Primate of a Church which from the time of Wyclif had held the translation and reading of the Bible in the common tongue to be heresy and a crime punishable with the fire, Erasmus boldly avowed his wish for a Bible open and intelligible to all. "I wish that even the weakest woman might read the Gospels and the Epistles of St. Paul. I wish that they were translated into all languages, so as to be read and understood not only by Scots and Irishmen, but even by Saracens and Turks. But the first step to their being read is to make them intelligible to the reader. I long for the day when the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, when the weaver shall hum them to the tune of his shuttle, when the traveller shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey." From the moment of its publication in 1516 the New Testament of Erasmus became the topic of the day; the Court, the Universities, every household to which the New Learning had penetrated, read and discussed it. But bold as its language may have seemed, Warham not only expressed his approbation, but lent the work—as he

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wrote to its author—"to bishop after bishop." The most influential of his suffragans, Bishop Fox of Winchester, declared that the mere version was worth ten commentaries; one of the most learned, Fisher of Rochester, entertained Erasmus at his house.

Daring and full of promise as were these efforts of the New Learning in the direction of educational and religious reform, its political and social speculations took a far wider range in the "Utopia" of Thomas More. Even in the household of Cardinal Morton, where he had spent his childhood, More's precocious ability had raised the highest hopes. "Whoever may live to see it," the grey-haired statesman used to say, "this boy now waiting at table will turn out a marvellous man." We have seen the spell which his wonderful learning and the sweetness of his temper threw at Oxford over Colet and Erasmus; and young as he was, More no sooner quitted the University than he was known throughout Europe as one of the foremost figures in the new movement. The keen, irregular face, the grey restless eye, the thin mobile lips, the tumbled brown hair, the careless gait and dress, as they remain stamped on the canvas of Holbein, picture the inner soul of the man, his vivacity, his restless, all-devouring intellect, his keen and even reckless wit, the kindly, half-sad humour that drew its strange veil of laughter and tears over the deep, tender reverence of the soul within. In a higher, because in a sweeter and more loveable form than Colet, More is the representative of the religious tendency of the New Learning in England. The young law-student who laughed at the superstition and asceticism of the monks of his day wore a hair shirt next his skin, and schooled himself by penances for the cell he desired among the Carthusians. It was characteristic of the man that among all the gay, profligate scholars of the Italian Renaissance he chose as the object of his admiration the disciple of Savonarola, Pico di Mirandola. Free-thinker as the bigots who listened to his daring

CHAP. II. speculations termed him, his eye would brighten and his tongue falter as he spoke with friends of heaven and the after-life. When he took office, it was with the open stipulation "first to look to God, and after God to the King."

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In his outer bearing indeed there was nothing of the monk or recluse. The brightness and freedom of the New Learning seemed incarnate in the young scholar with his gay talk, his winsomeness of manner, his reckless epigrams, his passionate love of music, his omnivorous reading, his paradoxical speculations, his gibes at monks, his schoolboy fervour of liberty. But events were soon to prove that beneath this sunny nature lay a stern inflexibility of conscientious resolve. The Florentine scholars penned declamations against tyrants while they covered with their flatteries the tyranny of the house of Medici. More no sooner entered Parliament in 1504 than his ready argument and keen sense of justice led to the rejection of the demand for a heavy subsidy. "A beardless boy," said the courtiers,—and More was only twenty-six,—"has disappointed the King's purpose;" and during the rest of Henry the Seventh's reign the young lawyer found it prudent to withdraw from public life. But the withdrawal had little effect on his buoyant activity. He rose at once into repute at the bar. He wrote his "Life of Edward the Fifth," the first work in which what we may call modern English prose appears written with purity and clearness of style and a freedom either from antiquated forms of expression or classical pedantry. His ascetic dreams were replaced by the affections of home. It is when we get a glimpse of him in his house at Chelsea that we understand the endearing epithets which Erasmus always lavishes upon More. The delight of the young husband was to train the girl he had chosen for his wife in his own taste for letters and for music. The reserve which the age exacted from parents was thrown to the winds in More's intercourse with his children. He loved teaching them, and lured them to their deeper studies by the coins and

curiosities he had gathered in his cabinet. He was as fond of their pets and their games as his children themselves, and would take grave scholars and statesmen into the garden to see his girls' rabbit-hutches or to watch the gambols of their favourite monkey. "I have given you kisses enough," he wrote to his little ones in merry verse when far away on political business, "but stripes hardly ever."

The accession of Henry the Eighth drew More back into the political current. It was at his house that Erasmus penned the "Praise of Folly," and the work, in its Latin title, "*Moriæ Encomium*," embodied in playful fun his love of the extravagant humour of More. He was already in Henry's favour; he was soon called to the royal court and used in the King's service. But More "tried as hard to keep out of court," says his descendant, "as most men try to get into it." When the charm of his conversation gave so much pleasure to the young sovereign "that he could not once in a month get leave to go home to his wife or children, whose company he much desired, . . . he began thereupon to dissemble his nature, and so, little by little, from his former mirth to dissemble himself." He shared to the full the disappointment of his friends at the sudden outbreak of Henry's warlike temper, but the Peace again brought him to Henry's side and he was soon in the King's confidence both as a counsellor and as a diplomatist. It was on one of his diplomatic missions that More describes himself as hearing news of the Kingdom of "Nowhere." "On a certain day when I had heard mass in Our Lady's Church, which is the fairest, the most gorgeous and curious church of building in all the city of Antwerp and also most frequented of people, and service being over I was ready to go home to my lodgings, I chanced to espy my friend Peter Gilles talking with a certain stranger, a man well stricken in age, with a black sun-burnt face, a large beard, and a cloke cast trimly about his shoulders, whom by his favour and apparell forthwith I judged to be a

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The
Utopia.

CHAP. II. mariner." The sailor turned out to have been a companion
 of Amerigo Vespucci in those voyages to the New World
 "that be now in print and abroad in every man's hand,"
 and on More's invitation he accompanied him to his house,
 and "there in my garden upon a bench covered with green
 turves we sate down, talking together" of the man's mar-
 vellous adventures, his desertion in America by Vespucci,
 his wanderings over the country under the equinoctial line,
 and at last of his stay in the Kingdom of "Nowhere."

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It was the story of "Nowhere," or Utopia, which More began in 1515 to embody in the wonderful book which reveals to us the heart of the New Learning. As yet the movement had been one of scholars and divines. Its plans of reform had been almost exclusively intellectual and religious. But in More the same free play of thought which had shaken off the old forms of education and faith turned to question the old forms of society and politics. From a world where fifteen hundred years of Christian teaching had produced social injustice, religious intolerance, and political tyranny the humourist philosopher turned to a "Nowhere" in which the mere efforts of natural human virtue realized those ends of security, equality, brotherhood, and freedom for which the very institution of society seemed to have been framed. It is as he wanders through this dreamland of the new reason that More touches the great problems which were fast opening before the modern world, problems of labour, of crime, of conscience, of government. Merely to have seen and to have examined questions such as these would prove the keenness of his intellect, but its far-reaching originality is shown in the solutions which he proposes. Amidst much that is the pure play of an exuberant fancy, much that is mere recollection of the dreams of bygone dreamers, we find again and again the most important social and political discoveries of later times anticipated by the genius of Thomas More.

In some points, such as his treatment of the question of

Labour, he still remains far in advance of current opinion. The whole system of society around him seemed to him "nothing but a conspiracy of the rich against the poor." Its economic legislation from the Statute of Labourers to the statutes by which the Parliament of 1515 strove to fix a standard of wages was simply the carrying out of such a conspiracy by process of law. "The rich are ever striving to pare away something further from the daily wages of the poor by private fraud and even by public law, so that the wrong already existing (for it is a wrong that those from whom the State derives most benefit should receive least reward) is made yet greater by means of the law of the State." "The rich devise every means by which they may in the first place secure to themselves what they have amassed by wrong, and then take to their own use and profit at the lowest possible price the work and labour of the poor. And so soon as the rich decide on adopting these devices in the name of the public, then they become law." The result was the wretched existence to which the labour class was doomed, "a life so wretched that even a beast's life seems enviable." No such cry of pity for the poor, of protest against the system of agrarian and manufacturing tyranny which found its expression in the Statute-book had been heard since the days of Piers Ploughman. But from Christendom More turns with a smile to "Nowhere." In "Nowhere" the aim of legislation is to secure the welfare, social, industrial, intellectual, religious, of the community at large, and of the labour-class as the true basis of a well-ordered commonwealth. The end of its labour-laws was simply the welfare of the labourer. Goods were possessed indeed in common, but work was compulsory with all. The period of toil was shortened to the nine hours demanded by modern artizans, and the object of this curtailment was the intellectual improvement of the worker. "In the institution of the weal public this end is only and chiefly pretended and minded that what time may possibly be spared from the necessary occupations and

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 and
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CHAP. II. affairs of the commonwealth, all that the citizens should withdraw from bodily service to the free liberty of the mind and garnishing of the same. For herein they conceive the felicity of this life to consist." A public system of education enabled the Utopians to avail themselves of their leisure. While in England half of the population could read no English, every child was well taught in "Nowhere." The physical aspects of society were cared for as attentively as its moral. The houses of Utopia "in the beginning were very low and like homely cottages or poor shepherd huts made at all adventures of every rude piece of timber that came first to hand, with mud walls and ridged roofs thatched over with straw." The picture was really that of the common English town of More's day, the home of squalor and pestilence. In Utopia however they had at last come to realize the connexion between public morality and the health which springs from light, air, comfort, and cleanliness. "The streets were twenty feet broad; the houses backed by spacious gardens, and, curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with their stories one after another. The outsides of the walls be made either of hard flint, or of plaster, or else of brick; and the inner sides be well strengthened by timber work. The roofs be plain and flat, covered over with plaster, so tempered that no fire can hurt or perish it, and withstanding the violence of the weather better than lead. They keep the wind out of their windows with glass, for it is there much used, and sometimes also with fine linen cloth dipped in oil or amber, and that for two commodities, for by this means more light cometh in and the wind is better kept out."

Crime.

The same foresight which appears in More's treatment of the questions of Labour and the Public Health is yet more apparent in his treatment of the question of Crime. He was the first to suggest that punishment was less effective in suppressing it than prevention. "If you allow your people to be badly taught, their morals to be corrupted from child-

hood, and then when they are men punish them for the very crimes to which they have been trained in childhood—what is this but to make thieves, and then to punish them?" He was the first to plead for proportion between the punishment and the crime, and to point out the folly of the cruel penalties of his day. "Simple theft is not so great an offence as to be punished with death." If a thief and a murderer are sure of the same penalty, More shows that the law is simply tempting the thief to secure his theft by murder. "While we go about to make thieves afraid, we are really provoking them to kill good men." The end of all punishment he declares to be reformation, "nothing else but the destruction of vice and the saving of men." He advises "so using and ordering criminals that they cannot choose but be good; and what harm soever they did before, the residue of their lives to make amends for the same." Above all he urges that to be remedial punishment must be wrought out by labour and hope, so that "none is hopeless or in despair to recover again his former state of freedom by giving good tokens and likelihood of himself that he will ever after that live a true and honest man." It is not too much to say that in the great principles More lays down he anticipated every one of the improvements in our criminal system which have distinguished the last hundred years.

His treatment of the religious question was even more in advance of his age. If the houses of Utopia were strangely in contrast with the halls of England, where the bones from every dinner lay rotting in the dirty straw which strewed the floor, where the smoke curled about the rafters, and the wind whistled through the unglazed windows; if its penal legislation had little likeness to the gallows which stood out so frequently against our English sky; the religion of "Nowhere" was in yet stronger conflict with the faith of Christendom. It rested simply on nature and reason. It held that God's design was the happiness of man, and that the ascetic rejection of human

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Religion.

CHAP. II. delights, save for the common good, was thanklessness to the Giver. Christianity indeed had already reached Utopia, but it had few priests; religion found its centre rather in the family than in the congregation: and each household confessed its faults to its own natural head. A yet stranger characteristic was seen in the peaceable way in which it lived side by side with the older religions. More than a century before William of Orange More discerned and proclaimed the great principle of religious toleration. In "Nowhere" it was lawful to every man to be of what religion he would. Even the disbelievers in a Divine Being or in the immortality of man, who by a single exception to its perfect religious indifference were excluded from public office, were excluded, not on the ground of their religious belief, but because their opinions were deemed to be degrading to mankind and therefore to incapacitate those who held them from governing in a noble temper. But they were subject to no punishment, because the people of Utopia were "persuaded that it is not in a man's power to believe what he list." The religion which a man held he might propagate by argument, though not by violence or insult to the religion of others. But while each sect performed its rites in private, all assembled for public worship in a spacious temple, where the vast throng, clad in white, and grouped round a priest clothed in fair raiment wrought marvellously out of birds' plumage, joined in hymns and prayers so framed as to be acceptable to all. The importance of this public devotion lay in the evidence it afforded that liberty of conscience could be combined with religious unity.

Political
Liberty.

But even more important than More's defence of religious freedom was his firm maintenance of political liberty against the monarchy. Steady and irresistible as was the growth of the royal power, it was far from seeming to the keenest political thinker of that day so natural and inevitable a developement of our history as it seems to

some writers in our own. In political hints which lie scattered over the whole of the Utopia More notes with a bitter irony the advance of the new despotism. It was only in "Nowhere" that a sovereign was "removeable on suspicion of a design to enslave his people." In England the work of slavery was being quietly wrought, hints the great lawyer, through the law. "There will never be wanting some pretence for deciding in the king's favour; as that equity is on his side, or the strict letter of the law, or some forced interpretation of it: or if none of these, that the royal prerogative ought with conscientious judges to outweigh all other considerations." We are startled at the precision with which More describes the processes by which the law courts were to lend themselves to the advance of tyranny till their crowning judgement in the case of ship-money. But behind these judicial expedients lay great principles of absolutism, which partly from the example of foreign monarchies, partly from the sense of social and political insecurity, and yet more from the isolated position of the Crown, were gradually winning their way in public opinion. "These notions"—More goes boldly on in words written, it must be remembered, within the precincts of Henry's court and beneath the eye of Wolsey—"these notions are fostered by the maxim that the king can do no wrong, however much he may wish to do it; that not only the property but the persons of his subjects are his own; and that a man has a right to no more than the king's goodness thinks fit not to take from him." It is only in the light of this emphatic protest against the king-worship which was soon to override liberty and law that we can understand More's later career. Steady to the last in his loyalty to Parliaments, as steady in his resistance to mere personal rule, it was with a smile as fearless as the smile with which he penned the half-jesting words of his Utopia that he sealed them with his blood on Tower Hill.

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CHAPTER III.

WOLSEY.

1514—1529.

*Wolsey's
rise.*

"THERE are many things in the Commonwealth of No-where that I rather wish than hope to see embodied in our own." It was with these words of characteristic irony that More closed the first work which embodied the dreams of the New Learning. Destined as they were to fulfilment in the course of ages, its schemes of social, religious, and political reform broke in fact helplessly against the temper of the time. At the moment when More was pleading the cause of justice between rich and poor social discontent was being fanned by new exactions and sterner laws into a fiercer flame. While he was advocating toleration and Christian comprehension Christendom stood on the verge of a religious strife which was to rend it for ever in pieces. While he aimed sarcasm after sarcasm at king-worship the new despotism of the Monarchy was being organized into a vast and all-embracing system by the genius of Thomas Wolsey. Wolsey was the son of a wealthy townsman of Ipswich whose ability had raised him into notice at the close of the preceding reign, and who had been taken by Bishop Fox into the service of the Crown. The activity which he showed in organizing and equipping the royal army for the campaign of 1513 won for him a foremost place in the confidence of Henry the Eighth. The young King lavished dignities on him with a profusion that marked the completeness of his trust. From the post

of royal almoner he was advanced in 1513 to the see of Tournay. At the opening of 1514 he became bishop of Lincoln; at its close he was translated to the archbishoprick of York. In 1515 Henry procured from Rome his elevation to the office of cardinal and raised him to the post of chancellor. So quick a rise stirred envy in the men about him; and his rivals noted bitterly the songs, the dances, and carousals which had won, as they believed, the favour of the king. But sensuous and worldly as was Wolsey's temper, his powers lifted him high above the level of a court favourite. His noble bearing, his varied ability, his enormous capacity for toil, the natural breadth and grandeur of his mind, marked him naturally out as the minister of a king who showed throughout his reign a keen eye for greatness in the men about him.

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Wolsey's mind was European rather than English; it dwelt little on home affairs but turned almost exclusively to the general politics of the European powers and of England as one of them. Whatever might be Henry's disappointment in the issue of his French campaigns the young King might dwell with justifiable pride on the general result of his foreign policy. If his direct gains from the Holy League had been little, he had at any rate won security on the side of France. The loss of Navarre and of the Milanese left Lewis a far less dangerous neighbour than he had seemed at Henry's accession, while the appearance of the Swiss soldiery during the war of the League destroyed the military supremacy which France had enjoyed from the days of Charles the Eighth. But if the war had freed England from the fear of French pressure Wolsey was as resolute to free her from the dictation of Ferdinand, and this the resentment of Henry at his unscrupulous desertion enabled him to bring about. Crippled as she was, France was no longer formidable as a foe; and her alliance would not only break the supremacy of Ferdinand over English policy but secure Henry on his northern border. Her husband's death at Flodden and the infancy

*Wolsey's
policy.*

CHAP. III. of their son raised Margaret Tudor to the Scotch regency, and seemed to promise Henry a hold on his troublesome neighbours. But her marriage a year later with the Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas, soon left the Regent powerless among the factions of warring nobles. She appealed to her brother for aid, while her opponents called on the Duke of Albany, the son of the Albany who had been driven to France in 1484 and heir to the crown after the infant king, to return and take the regency. Albany held broad lands in France; he had won fame as a French general; and Scotland in his hands would be simply a means of French attack. A French alliance not only freed Henry from dependence on Ferdinand but would meet this danger from the north; and in the summer of 1514 a treaty was concluded with the French King and ratified by his marriage with Henry's youngest sister, Mary Tudor.

*Francis
the
First.*

The treaty was hardly signed when the death of Lewis in January 1515 undid this marriage and placed his young cousin, Francis the First, upon the throne. But the old king's death brought no change of policy. Francis at once prepared to renew the war in Italy, and for this purpose he needed the friendship of his two neighbours in the west and the north, Henry and the ruler of the Netherlands, the young Charles of Austria. Both were willing to give their friendship. Charles, jealous of Maximilian's desire to bring him into tutelage, looked to a French alliance as a security against the pressure of the Emperor, while Henry and Wolsey were eager to despatch Francis on a campaign across the Alps, which would at any rate while it lasted remove all fear of an attack on England. A yet stronger ground in the minds of both Charles and Henry for facilitating the French King's march was their secret belief that his invasion of the Milanese would bring the young king to inevitable ruin, for the Emperor and Ferdinand of Aragon were leagued with every Italian state against Francis, and a Swiss army prepared to dispute with him the possession of the Milanese. Charles therefore

betrothed himself to the French King's sister, and Henry concluded a fresh treaty with him in the spring of 1515. But the dreams of both rulers were roughly broken. Francis succeeded both in crossing the Alps and in beating the Swiss army. His victory in the greatest battle of the age, the battle of Marignano, at once gave him the Milanese and laid the rest of Italy at his feet. The work of the Holy Alliance was undone, and the dominion which England had dreaded in the hands of Lewis the Twelfth was restored in the younger and more vigorous hands of his successor. Neither the King nor the Cardinal could hide their chagrin when the French minister announced his master's victory, but it was no time for an open breach. All Wolsey could do was to set himself secretly to hamper the French King's work. English gold hindered any reconciliation between France and the Swiss, and enabled Maximilian to lead a joint army of Swiss and Imperial soldiers in the following year over the Alps.

But the campaign broke down. At this juncture indeed the death of Ferdinand in January 1516 changed the whole aspect of European politics. It at once opened to Charles of Austria his Spanish and Neapolitan heritage. The presence of the young King was urgently called for by the troubles that followed in Castile, and Charles saw that peace was needed for the gathering into his hands of realms so widely scattered as his own. Maximilian too was ready to set aside all other aims to secure the aggrandizement of his house. After an inactive campaign therefore the Emperor negotiated secretly with France, and the treaty of Noyon which Charles concluded with Francis in August 1516 was completed in March 1517 by the accession of Maximilian to their alliance in the Treaty of Cambray. To all outer seeming the Treaty of Cambray left Francis supreme in the west, unequalled in military repute, a soldier who at twenty had withstood and broken the league of all Europe in arms, master of the Milanese, and through his

*Charles
the
Fifth.*

*Wolsey.
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CHAP. III. alliances with Venice, Florence, and the Pope virtually master of all Italy save the Neapolitan realm. On the other hand the treaty left England exposed and alone, should France choose this moment for attack. Francis was well aware of Wolsey's efforts against him, and the state of Scotland offered the ready means of bringing about a quarrel. While Henry, anxious as he was to aid his sister, was fettered by the fear that English intervention would bring French intervention in its train and endanger the newly concluded alliance, Albany succeeded in evading the English cruizers and landing in the May of 1515. He was at once declared Protector of the realm by the Parliament at Edinburgh. Margaret on the other hand was driven into Stirling, and after a short siege forced to take refuge in England. The influence of Albany and the French party whom he headed secured for Francis in any struggle the aid of Scotland. But neither Henry nor his minister really dreaded danger from the Treaty of Cambray; on the contrary it solved all their difficulties. So well did they understand the aim of Charles in concluding it that they gave him the gold which enabled him to reach Spain. Master of Castile and Aragon, of Naples and the Netherlands, the Spanish King rose into a check on the French monarchy such as the policy of Henry or Wolsey had never been able to construct before. Instead of towering over Europe, Francis found himself confronted in the hour of his pride by a rival whom he was never to overcome; while England, deserted and isolated as she seemed for the moment, was eagerly sought in alliance by both princes. In October 1518 Francis strove to bind her to his cause by a new treaty of peace, in which England sold Tournay to France and the hand of the French dauphin was promised to Henry's daughter Mary, now a child of two years old.

*Wolsey's
greatness.*

At the close of 1518 therefore the policy of Wolsey seemed justified by success. He had found England a power of the second order, overawed by France and dictated to

by Ferdinand of Spain. She now stood in the forefront of European affairs, a state whose alliance was desired alike by French King and Spanish King, and which dealt on equal terms with Pope or Emperor. In European cabinets Wolsey was regarded as hardly less a power to be conciliated than his royal master. Both Charles and Francis sought his friendship; and in the years which followed his official emoluments were swelled by pensions from both princes. At home the King loaded him with new proofs of favour. The revenues of two sees whose tenants were foreigners fell into his hands; he held the bishoprick of Winchester and the abbacy of St. Albans. He spent this vast wealth with princely ostentation. His pomp was almost royal. A train of prelates and nobles followed him as he moved; his household was composed of five hundred persons of noble birth, and its chief posts were occupied by knights and barons of the realm. Two of the houses he built, Hampton Court and York House, the later Whitehall, were splendid enough to serve at his fall as royal palaces. Nor was this magnificence a mere show of power. The whole direction of home and foreign affairs rested with Wolsey alone. His toil was ceaseless. The morning was for the most part given to his business as chancellor in Westminster Hall and at the Star-Chamber; but nightfall still found him labouring at exchequer business or home administration, managing Church affairs, unravelling the complexities of Irish misgovernment, planning schools and colleges, above all drawing and studying despatches and transacting the whole diplomatic correspondence of the state. Greedy as was his passion for toil, Wolsey felt the pressure of this enormous mass of business, and his imperious tones, his angry outbursts of impatience showed him to be overworked. Even his vigorous frame gave way. Still a strong and handsome man in 1518 at the age of forty-seven, Wolsey was already an old man, broken by disease, when he fell from power at fifty-five. But enormous as was the mass of work which he undertook, it

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Wolsey.
 1514.
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Concentration of
 secular
 and ecclesiastical
 power.

was thoroughly done. His administration of the royal treasury was rigidly economical. The number of his despatches is hardly less remarkable than the care he bestowed on each. Even More, an avowed enemy, owns that as Chancellor he surpassed all men's expectations. The court of Chancery indeed became so crowded through the character for expedition and justice which it gained under his rule that subordinate courts had to be created for its relief.

But not even with this concentration of authority in a single hand was Henry content. At the close of 1517 he procured from the Pope the Cardinal's appointment as Legate *a latere* in the realm. Such a Legate was entrusted with powers almost as full as those of the Pope himself; his jurisdiction extended over every bishop and priest, it overrode every privilege or exemption of abbey or cell, while his court superseded that of Rome as the final court of ecclesiastical appeal for the realm. Already wielding the full powers of secular justice in his capacity of Chancellor and of president of the royal Council, Wolsey wielded the full power of spiritual justice in his capacity of Legate. His elevation was no mere freak of royal favour; it was the result of a distinct policy. The moment had come when the Monarchy was to gather up all government into the personal grasp of the King. The checks which had been imposed on the action of the sovereign by the presence of great prelates and lords at his council were practically removed. His fellow councillors learned to hold their peace when the haughty minister "clapped his rod on the board." The restraints of public justice were equally done away. Even the distant check of Rome was gone. All secular, all ecclesiastical power was summed up in a single hand. It was this concentration of authority in Wolsey which accustomed England to a system of personal government under Henry and his successors. It was the Cardinal's long tenure of the whole Papal authority within the realm, and the consequent suspension of appeals to Rome, that led men to acquiesce

CHAP. III.
Wolsey.
 1514.
 1529.

Rivalry
 of
 Charles
 and
 Francis.

at a later time in Henry's own claim of religious supremacy. For proud as was Wolsey's bearing and high as were his natural powers he stood before England as the mere creature of the King. Greatness, wealth, authority he held, and owned he held, simply at the royal will. In raising his low-born favourite to the head of church and state Henry was gathering all religious as well as all civil authority into his personal grasp. The nation which trembled before Wolsey learned to tremble before the master who could destroy Wolsey with a breath.

The rise of Charles of Austria gave a new turn to Wolsey's policy. Till now France had been a pressing danger, and the political scheme both of Henry and his minister lay in organizing leagues to check her greatness or in diverting her activity to the fields of Lombardy. But from the moment of Ferdinand's death this power of Francis was balanced by the power of Charles. Possessor of the Netherlands, of Franche Comté, of Spain, Charles already pressed France on its northern, eastern, and southern borders when the death of his grandfather Maximilian in the spring of 1519 added to his dominions the heritage of the House of Austria in Swabia and on the Danube. It did yet more for him in opening to him the Empire. The intrigues of Maximilian had secured for Charles promises of support from a majority of the Electors, and though Francis redoubled his efforts and Henry the Eighth sent an envoy to push his own succession the cry of Germany for a German head carried all before it. In June 1519 Charles was elected Emperor; and France saw herself girt in on every side by a power whose greed was even greater than her own. For, boy of nineteen as he was, Charles from the first moment of his rule meant to make himself master of the world; and France, thrown suddenly on the defensive, nerved herself for the coming struggle. Both needed the gold and friendship of England. Convinced as he was of Henry's treachery in the Imperial election, where the

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English sovereign had promised Francis his support, the French King clung to the alliance which Wolsey in his uncertainty as to the actual drift of Charles had concluded in 1518, and pressed for an interview with Henry himself. But the need of France had woke dreams of more than mere safety or a balanced neutrality in Wolsey and his master. The time seemed come at last for a bolder game. The claim on the French crown had never been waived; the dream of recovering at least Guienne and Normandy still lived on in the hearts of English statesmen; and the subtle, unscrupulous youth who was now planning his blow for the mastery of the world knew well how to seize upon dreams such as these. Nor was Wolsey forgotten. If Henry coveted France, his minister coveted no less a prize than the Papacy; and the young Emperor was lavish of promises of support in any coming election. The result of his seductions was quickly seen. While Henry deferred the interview with Francis till the summer of 1520, Charles had already planned a meeting with his uncle in the opening of the year.

*League
with
Charles.*

What importance Charles attached to this meeting was seen in his leaving Spain ablaze with revolt behind him to keep his engagement. He landed at Dover in the end of May, and King and Emperor rode alone to Canterbury, but of the promises or pledges which passed we know little save from the after-course of English politics. Nothing could have differed more vividly from this simple ride than the interview with Francis which followed in June. A camp of three hundred white tents surrounded a faery palace with gilded posterns and brightly coloured oriels which rose like a dream from the barren plain of Guisnes, its walls hung with tapestry, its roof embossed with roses, its golden fountain spouting wine over the greensward. But all this pomp and splendour, the chivalrous embraces and tourneys of the Kings, the gorgeous entry of Wolsey in his crimson robe on a mule trapped with gold, the fresh treaty which ratified the alliance, hardly veiled the new

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English purpose. A second interview between Charles and his uncle as he returned from the meeting with Francis ended in a secret confederacy of the two sovereigns and the promise of the Emperor to marry his cousin, Henry's one child, Mary Tudor. With her hand passed the heritage of the English Crown. Henry had now ceased to hope for a son from Catharine, and Mary was his destined successor. Her right to the throne was asserted by a deed which proved how utterly the baronage now lay at the mercy of the King. The Duke of Buckingham stood first in blood as in power among the English nobles; he was the descendant of Edward the Third's youngest son, and if Mary's succession were denied he stood heir to the throne. His hopes had been fanned by prophets and astrologers, and wild words told his purpose to seize the Crown on Henry's death in defiance of every opponent. But word and act had for two years been watched by the King; and in 1521 the Duke was arrested, condemned as a traitor by his peers, and beheaded on Tower Hill. His blood was a pledge of Henry's sincerity which Charles could not mistake. Francis on the other hand had never for a moment been deceived by the profuse assurances of friendship which the King and Wolsey lavished on him. A revolt of the Spanish towns offered a favourable opportunity for an attack on his rival, and a French army passed over the Pyrenees into Navarre while Francis himself prepared to invade the Netherlands. Both princes appealed for aid under their separate treaties to Henry; and the English sovereign, whom the quick stroke of the French had taken by surprise, could only gain time by a feigned mediation in which Wolsey visited both Emperor and King. But at the close of the year England was at last ready for action, and Wolsey's solemn decision that Francis was the aggressor was followed in November by a secret league which was concluded at Calais between the Pope, the Emperor, and Henry.

The conquest of the Milanese by the imperial generals

CHAP. III. turned at this moment the balance of the war, and as the
 Wolsey. struggle went on the accession of Venice and the lesser
 1514- Italian republics, of the King of Hungary and Ferdinand
 1529. of Austria, to whom Charles had ceded his share in the
 Benevo- hereditary duchy of their house, to the alliance for the
 lences. recovery of Italy from the French, threatened ruin to the
 cause of Francis. In real power however the two comba-
 tants were still fairly matched. If she stood alone, France
 was rich and compact, while her opponents were scattered,
 distracted by warring aims, and all equally poor. The
 wealth which had given Henry his weight in the coun-
 sels of Europe at the opening of his reign had been
 exhausted by his earlier wars, and Wolsey's economy had
 done nothing more than tide the crown through the past
 years of peace. But now that Henry had promised to
 raise forty thousand men for the coming campaign the
 ordinary resources of the treasury were utterly insufficient.
 With the instinct of despotism Wolsey shrank from re-
 viving the tradition of the Parliament. Though Henry had
 thrice called the Houses together to supply the expenses
 of his earlier struggle with France his minister had
 governed through seven years of peace without once
 assembling them. War made a Parliament inevitable, but
 for a while Wolsey strove to delay its summons by a wide
 extension of the practice which Edward the Fourth had
 invented of raising money by forced loans or "Benevo-
 lences," to be repaid from the first subsidy of a coming
 Parliament. Large sums were assessed upon every county.
 Twenty thousand pounds were exacted from London, and its
 wealthier citizens were summoned before the Cardinal and
 required to give an account of the value of their estates.
 Commissioners were sent into each shire for the purposes
 of assessment, and precepts were issued on their informa-
 tion, requiring in some cases supplies of soldiers, in others
 a tenth of a man's income, for the King's service. So
 poor however was the return that the Earl of Surrey, who
 was sent as general to Calais, could muster only a force

of seventeen thousand men; and while Charles succeeded
 in driving the French from Milan, the English campaign
 dwindled into a mere raid upon Picardy, from which the
 army fell back, broken with want and disease.

The Cardinal was driven to call the Estates together in
 April 1523; and the conduct of the Commons showed how
 little the new policy of the Monarchy had as yet done to
 change the temper of the nation or to break its loyalty to
 the tradition of constitutional freedom. Wolsey needed the
 sum of eight hundred thousand pounds, and proposed to
 raise it by a property tax of twenty per cent. Such a
 demand was unprecedented, but the Cardinal counted on
 his presence to bear down all opposition, and made the
 demand in person. He was received with obstinate
 silence. It was in vain that he called on member after
 member to answer; and his appeal to More, who had been
 elected to fill the chair of the House of Commons, was met
 by the Speaker's falling on his knees and representing his
 powerlessness to reply till he had received instructions
 from the House itself. The effort to overawe the Commons
 had in fact failed, and Wolsey was forced to retire. He
 had no sooner withdrawn than an angry debate began, and
 the Cardinal returned to answer the objections which were
 raised to the subsidy. But the Commons again foiled the
 minister's attempt to influence their deliberations by re-
 fusing to discuss the matter in his presence. The struggle
 continued for a fortnight; and though successful in pro-
 curing a grant the court party were forced to content them-
 selves with less than half of Wolsey's original demand.
 The Church displayed as independent a spirit. Wolsey's
 aim of breaking down constitutional traditions was shown,
 as in the case of the Commons, by his setting aside the old
 assembly of the provincial convocations, and as Legate sum-
 moning the clergy to meet in a national synod. But the
 clergy held as stubbornly to constitutional usage as the
 laity, and the Cardinal was forced to lay his demand before
 them in their separate convocations. Even here however

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Wolsey.

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and the
Parlia-
ment.

CHAP. III. the enormous grant he asked was disputed for four months, and the matter had at last to be settled by a compromise. *Wolsey.*
 1514-1529. It was plain that England was far from having sunk to a slavish submission to the monarchy. But galled as *War with France.* Wolsey was by the resistance, his mind was too full of vast schemes of foreign conquest to turn to any resolute conflict with opposition at home. The treason of the Duke of Bourbon stirred a new hope of conquering France. Bourbon was Constable of France, the highest of the French nobles both from his blood and the almost independent power he wielded in his own duchy and in Provence. But a legal process by which Francis sought to recall his vast possessions to the domain of the crown threatened him with ruin; and driven to secret revolt, he pledged himself to rise against the King on the appearance of the allied armies in the heart of the realm. His offer was eagerly accepted, and so confident were the conspirators of success that they at once settled the division of their spoil. To Henry his hopes seemed at last near their realization; and while Burgundy fell naturally to Charles, his ally claimed what remained of France and the French crown. The departure of Francis with his army for Italy was to be the signal for the execution of the scheme, a joint army of English and Imperialists advancing to Bourbon's aid from the north while a force of Spaniards and Germans marched to the same point from the south. As the French troops moved to the Alps a German force penetrated in August into Lorraine, an English army disembarked at Calais, and a body of Spaniards descended from the Pyrenees. But at the moment of its realization the discovery of the plot and an order for his arrest foiled Bourbon's designs; and his precipitate flight threw these skilful plans into confusion. Francis remained in his realm. Though the army which he sent over the Alps was driven back from the walls of Milan it still held to Piedmont, while the allied force in northern France under the command of the Duke of Suffolk advanced to the Oise only to find itself un-

supported and to fall hastily back, and the slow advance of the Spaniards frustrated the campaign in Guienne. In Scotland alone a gleam of success lighted on the English arms. At the close of the former war Albany had withdrawn to France and Margaret regained her power; but a quarrel both with her husband and the English King brought the Queen-mother herself to invite the Duke to return. On the outbreak of the new struggle with Francis Henry at once insisted on his withdrawal, and though Albany marched on England with a large and well-equipped army, the threats of the English commander so wrought on him that he engaged to disband it and fled over sea. Henry and his sister drew together again; and Margaret announced that her son, James the Fifth, who had now reached his twelfth year, assumed the government as King, while Lord Surrey advanced across the border to support her against the French party among the nobles. But the presence of an English army roused the whole people to arms. Albany was recalled; and Surrey saw himself forced to retreat while the Duke with sixty thousand men crossed the border and formed the siege of Wark. But again his cowardice ruined all. No sooner did Surrey, now heavily reinforced, advance to offer battle than Albany fell back to Lauder. Laying down the regency he set sail for France, and the resumption of her power by Margaret relieved England from its dread of a Scotch attack.

Baffled as he had been, Henry still clung to his schemes of a French crown; and the defeat of the French army in Lombardy in 1524, the evacuation of Italy, and the advance of the Imperialist troops into France itself revived his hopes of success. Unable to set an army on foot in Picardy, he furnished the Emperor with supplies which enabled his troops to enter the south. But the selfish policy of Charles was at once shown by the siege of Marseilles. While Henry had gained nothing from the alliance Charles had gained the Milanese, and he was now preparing by the conquest of Provence and the Mediterranean

CHAP. III
Wolsey.
 1514-1529.

Henry and Charles.

CHAP. III. coast to link his possessions in Italy with his possessions in Spain. Such a project was more practical and statesmanlike than the visions of a conquest of France; but it was not to further the Emperor's greatness that England had wasted money and men. Henry felt that he was tricked as he had been tricked in 1523. Then as now it was clearly the aim of Charles to humble Francis, but not to transfer the French crown to his English ally. Nor was the resentment of Wolsey at the Emperor's treachery less than that of the King. At the death of Leo the Tenth, as at the death of his successor, Charles had fulfilled his pledge to the Cardinal by directing his party in the Sacred College to support his choice. But secret directions counteracted the open ones; and Wolsey had seen the tutor of the Emperor, Adrian the Sixth, and his partizan, Clement the Seventh, successively raised to the papal chair. The eyes of both King and minister were at last opened, and Henry drew cautiously from his ally, suspending further payments to Bourbon's army, and opening secret negotiations with France. But the face of affairs was changed anew by the obstinate resistance of Marseilles, the ruin and retreat of the Imperialist forces, and the sudden advance of Francis with a new army over the Alps. Though Milan was saved from his grasp, the Imperial troops were surrounded and besieged in Pavia. For three months they held stubbornly out, but famine at last forced them to a desperate resolve; and in February 1525, at a moment when the French army was weakened by the despatch of forces to Southern Italy, a sudden attack of the Imperialists ended in a crushing victory. The French were utterly routed and Francis himself remained a prisoner in the hands of the conquerors. The ruin as it seemed of France roused into fresh life the hopes of the English King. Again drawing closely to Charles he offered to join the Emperor in an invasion of France with forty thousand men, to head his own forces, and to furnish heavy subsidies for the cost of the war. Should the

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1514-
1529.

allies prove successful and Henry be crowned King of France, he pledged himself to cede to Bourbon Dauphiny and his duchy, to surrender Burgundy, Provence, and Languedoc to the Emperor, and to give Charles the hand of his daughter, Mary, and with it the heritage of two crowns which would in the end make him master of the world.

Though such a project seemed hardly perhaps as possible to Wolsey as to his master it served to test the sincerity of Charles in his adhesion to the alliance. But whether they were in earnest or no in proposing it, King and minister had alike to face the difficulty of an empty treasury. Money was again needed for action, but to obtain a new grant from parliament was impossible, nor was Wolsey eager to meet fresh rebuffs from the spirit of the Commons or the clergy. He was driven once more to the system of Benevolences. In every county a tenth was demanded from the laity and a fourth from the clergy by the royal commissioners. But the demand was met by a general resistance. The political instinct of the nation discerned as of old that in the question of self-taxation was involved that of the very existence of freedom. The clergy put themselves in the forefront of the opposition, and preached from every pulpit that the commission was contrary to the liberties of the realm and that the King could take no man's goods but by process of law. Archbishop Warham, who was pressing the demand in Kent, was forced to write to the court that "there was sore grudging and murmuring among the people." "If men should give their goods by a commission," said the Kentish squires, "then it would be worse than the taxes of France, and England should be bond, not free." So stirred was the nation that Wolsey bent to the storm and offered to rely on the voluntary loans of each subject. But the statute of Richard the Third which declared all exaction of Benevolences illegal was recalled to memory; the demand was evaded

CHAP. III.
Wolsey.
1514-
1529.
*Resistance
to Benevo-
lences.*

CHAP. III. by London, and the Commissioners were driven out of
 Wolsey. Kent. A revolt actually broke out among the weavers
 1514- of Suffolk; the men of Cambridge banded for resistance;
 1529. the Norwich clothiers, though they yielded at first, soon
 threatened to rise. "Who is your captain?" the Duke of
 Norfolk asked the crowd. "His name is Poverty," was
 the answer, "for he and his cousin Necessity have brought
 us to this doing." There was in fact a general strike of
 the employers. Clothmakers discharged their workers,
 farmers put away their servants. "They say the King
 asketh so much that they be not able to do as they have
 done before this time." Such a peasant insurrection as
 was raging in Germany was only prevented by the uncon-
 ditional withdrawal of the royal demand.

*End of the
 Austrian
 Alliance.*

The check was too rough a one not to rouse both
 Wolsey and the King. Henry was wroth at the need
 of giving way before rebels, and yet more wroth at the
 blow which the strife had dealt to the popularity on
 which he set so great a store. Wolsey was more keenly
 hurt by the overthrow of his hopes for a decisive cam-
 paign. Without money it was impossible to take advan-
 tage of the prostration of France or bring the Emperor
 to any serious effort for its subjection and partition.
 But Charles had no purpose in any case of playing the
 English game, or of carrying out the pledges by which he
 had lured England into war. He concluded an armistice
 with his prisoner, and used Wolsey's French negotiations
 in the previous year as a ground for evading fulfilment of
 his stipulations. The alliance was in fact at an end; and
 the schemes of winning anew "our inheritance of France,"
 had ended in utter failure. So sharp a blow could hardly
 fail to shake Wolsey's power. The popular clamour against
 him on the score of the Benevolences found echoes at
 court; and it was only by a dexterous gift to Henry
 of his newly-built palace at Hampton Court that Wolsey
 again won his old influence over the King. Buried indeed
 as both Henry and his minister were in schemes of distant

ambition, the sudden and general resistance of England
 woke them to an uneasy consciousness that their dream
 of uncontrolled authority was yet to find hindrances in the
 temper of the people they ruled. And at this moment a
 new and irresistible power began to quicken the national
 love of freedom and law. It was the influence of religion
 which was destined to ruin the fabric of the Monarchy;
 and the year which saw the defeat of the Crown in its
 exaction of Benevolences saw the translation of the
 English Bible.

While Charles and Francis were struggling for the
 lordship of the world, Germany had been shaken by the
 outburst of the Reformation. "That Luther has a fine
 genius!" laughed Leo the Tenth when he heard in 1517
 that a German Professor had nailed some Propositions
 denouncing the abuse of Indulgences, or of the Papal
 power to remit certain penalties attached to the com-
 mission of sins, against the doors of a church at Wittem-
 berg. But the "Quarrel of Friars," as the controversy
 was termed contemptuously at Rome, soon took larger
 proportions. If at the outset Luther flung himself "pros-
 trate at the feet" of the Papacy and owned its voice as
 the voice of Christ, the sentence of Leo no sooner confirmed
 the doctrine of Indulgences than their opponent appealed
 to a future Council of the Church. In 1520 the rupture
 was complete. A Papal Bull formally condemned the
 errors of the Reformer, and Luther publicly consigned
 the Bull to the flames. A second condemnation expelled
 him from the bosom of the Church, and the ban of the
 Empire was soon added to that of the Papacy. Charles
 the Fifth had bought Leo's alliance with himself and
 England by a promise of repressing the new heresy; and
 its author was called to appear before him in a Diet at
 Worms. "Here stand I; I can none other," Luther re-
 plied to the young Emperor as he pressed him to recant;
 and from a hiding-place in the Thuringian forest where
 he was sheltered after his condemnation by the Elector

CHAP. III.
 Wolsey.
 1514-
 1529.

Luther.

CHAP. III. of Saxony he denounced not merely, as at first, the abuses
 Wolsey. of the Papacy, but the Papacy itself. The heresies of
 1514- Wyclif were revived; the infallibility, the authority of
 1529. the Roman See, the truth of its doctrines, the efficacy of
 its worship, were denied and scoffed at in vigorous pam-
 phlets which issued from his retreat and were dispersed
 throughout the world by the new printing-press. Ger-
 many welcomed them with enthusiasm. Its old resent-
 ment against the oppression of Rome, the moral revolt in
 its more religious minds against the secularity and cor-
 ruption of the Church, the disgust of the New Learning at
 the superstition which the Papacy now formally protected,
 combined to secure for Luther a widespread popularity and
 the protection of the northern princes of the Empire.

*Luther
 and the
 New
 Learning.*

In England his protest seemed at first to find no echo. The King himself was both on political and religious grounds firm on the Papal side. England and Rome were drawn to a close alliance by the identity of their political position. Each was hard pressed between the same great powers; Rome had to hold its own between the masters of southern and the masters of northern Italy, as England had to hold her own between the rulers of France and of the Netherlands. From the outset of his reign to the actual break with Clement the Seventh the policy of Henry is always at one with that of the Papacy. Nor were the king's religious tendencies hostile to it. He was a trained theologian and proud of his theological knowledge, but to the end his convictions remained firmly on the side of the doctrines which Luther denied. In 1521 therefore he entered the lists against Luther with an "Assertion of the Seven Sacraments" for which he was rewarded by Leo with the title of "Defender of the Faith." The insolent abuse of the Reformer's answer called More and Fisher into the field. The influence of the New Learning was now strong at the English Court. Colet and Grocyn were among its foremost preachers; Linacre was Henry's physician; More was a privy councillor; Pace was one of the Secretaries of State;

CHAP. III. Tunstall was Master of the Rolls. And as yet the New
 Learning, though scared by Luther's intemperate language, had steadily backed him in his struggle. Erasmus pleaded for him with the Emperor. Ulrich von Hutten attacked the friars in satires and invectives as violent as his own. But the temper of the Renaissance was even more antagonistic to the temper of Luther than that of Rome itself. From the golden dream of a new age wrought peaceably and purely by the slow progress of intelligence, the growth of letters, the developement of human virtue, the Reformer of Wittemberg turned away with horror. He had little or no sympathy with the new culture. He despised reason as heartily as any Papal dogmatist could despise it. He hated the very thought of toleration or comprehension. He had been driven by a moral and intellectual compulsion to declare the Roman system a false one, but it was only to replace it by another system of doctrine just as elaborate, and claiming precisely the same infallibility. To degrade human nature was to attack the very base of the New Learning; and his attack on it called the foremost of its teachers to the field. But Erasmus no sooner advanced to its defence than Luther declared man to be utterly enslaved by original sin and incapable through any efforts of his own of discovering truth or of arriving at goodness. Such a doctrine not only annihilated the piety and wisdom of the classic past, from which the New Learning had drawn its larger views of life and of the world; it trampled in the dust reason itself, the very instrument by which More and Erasmus hoped to regenerate both knowledge and religion. To More especially, with his keener perception of its future effect, this sudden revival of a purely theological and dogmatic spirit, severing Christendom into warring camps and ruining all hopes of union and tolerance, was especially hateful. The temper which hitherto had seemed so "endearing, gentle, and happy," suddenly gave way.

CHAP. III.
 Wolsey.
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CHAP. III. His reply to Luther's attack upon the King sank to the level of the work it answered; and though that of Bishop Fisher was calmer and more argumentative the divorce of the New Learning from the Reformation seemed complete.

Wolsey.
1514-
1529.

Tyndale.

But if the world of scholars and thinkers stood aloof from the new movement it found a warmer welcome in the larger world where men are stirred rather by emotion than by thought. There was an England of which even More and Colet knew little in which Luther's words kindled a fire that was never to die. As a great social and political movement Lollardry had ceased to exist, and little remained of the directly religious impulse given by Wyclif beyond a vague restlessness and discontent with the system of the Church. But weak and fitful as was the life of Lollardry the prosecutions whose records lie scattered over the bishops' registers failed wholly to kill it. We see groups meeting here and there to read "in a great book of heresy all one night certain chapters of the Evangelists in English," while transcripts of Wyclif's tracts passed from hand to hand. The smouldering embers needed but a breath to fan them into flame, and the breath came from William Tyndale. Born among the Cotswolds when Bosworth Field gave England to the Tudors, Tyndale passed from Oxford to Cambridge to feel the full impulse given by the appearance there of the New Testament of Erasmus. From that moment one thought was at his heart. He "perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth except the scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue." "If God spare my life," he said to a learned controversialist, "ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the scripture than thou dost." But he was a man of forty before his dream became fact. Drawn from his retirement in Gloucestershire by the news of Luther's protest at Wittenberg, he found shelter for a year with a London Alderman, Humfrey Monmouth. "He

studied most part of the day at his book" said his host afterwards, "and would eat but sodden meat by his good will and drink but small single beer." The book at which he studied was the Bible. But it was soon needful to quit England if his purpose was to hold. "I understood at the last not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England." From Hamburg, where he took refuge in 1524, he probably soon found his way to the little town which had suddenly become the sacred city of the Reformation. Students of all nations were flocking there with an enthusiasm which resembled that of the Crusades. "As they came in sight of the town," a contemporary tells us, "they returned thanks to God with clasped hands, for from Wittenberg, as heretofore from Jerusalem, the light of evangelical truth had spread to the utmost parts of the earth."

Such a visit could only fire Tyndale to face the "poverty, exile, bitter absence from friends, hunger and thirst and cold, great dangers, and innumerable other hard and sharp fightings," which the work he had set himself was to bring with it. In 1525 his version of the New Testament was completed, and means were furnished by English merchants for printing it at Köln. But Tyndale had soon to fly with his sheets to Worms, a city whose Lutheran tendencies made it a safer refuge, and it was from Worms that six thousand copies of the New Testament were sent in 1526 to English shores. The King was keenly opposed to a book which he looked on as made "at the solicitation and instance of Luther;" and even the men of the New Learning from whom it might have hoped for welcome were estranged from it by its Lutheran origin. We can only fairly judge their action by viewing it in the light of the time. What Warham and More saw over sea might well have turned them from a movement which seemed breaking down the very foundations of religion and society. Not only was the fabric of

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tion of
the Bible.

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the Church rent asunder and the centre of Christian unity denounced as "Babylon," but the reform itself seemed passing into anarchy. Luther was steadily moving onward from the denial of one Catholic dogma to that of another; and what Luther still clung to his followers were ready to fling away. Carlstadt was denouncing the reformer of Wittenberg as fiercely as Luther himself had denounced the Pope, and meanwhile the religious excitement was kindling wild dreams of social revolution, and men stood aghast at the horrors of a Peasant-War which broke out in Southern Germany. It was not therefore as a mere translation of the Bible that Tyndale's work reached England. It came as a part of the Lutheran movement, and it bore the Lutheran stamp in its version of ecclesiastical words. "Church" became "congregation," "priest" was changed into "elder." It came too in company with Luther's bitter invectives and reprints of the tracts of Wyclif, which the German traders of the Steelyard were importing in large numbers. We can hardly wonder that More denounced the book as heretical, or that Warham ordered it to be given up by all who possessed it.

Wolsey
and
Lutheran-
ism.

Wolsey took little heed of religious matters, but his policy was one of political adhesion to Rome, and he presided over a solemn penance to which some Steelyard men submitted in St. Pauls. "With six and thirty abbots, mitred priors, and bishops, and he in his whole pomp mitred" the Cardinal looked on while "great baskets full of books . . . were commanded after the great fire was made before the Rood of Northen," the crucifix by the great north door of the cathedral, "thus to be burned, and those heretics to go thrice about the fire and to cast in their fagots." But scenes and denunciations such as these were vain in the presence of an enthusiasm which grew every hour. "Englishmen" says a scholar of the time "were so eager for the gospel as to affirm that they would buy a New Testament even if they had to give a hundred thousand pieces of money for it." Bibles and pamphlets were

smuggled over to England and circulated among the poorer and trading classes through the agency of an association of "Christian Brethren," consisting principally of London tradesmen and citizens, but whose missionaries spread over the country at large. They found their way at once to the Universities, where the intellectual impulse given by the New Learning was quickening religious speculation. Cambridge had already won a name for heresy; Barnes, one of its foremost scholars, had to carry his fagot before Wolsey at St. Pauls; two other Cambridge teachers, Bilney and Latimer, were already known as "Lutherans." The Cambridge scholars whom Wolsey introduced into Cardinal College which he was founding spread the contagion through Oxford. A group of "Brethren" was formed in Cardinal College for the secret reading and discussion of the Epistles; and this soon included the more intelligent and learned scholars of the University. It was in vain that Clark, the centre of this group, strove to dissuade fresh members from joining it by warnings of the impending dangers. "I fell down on my knees at his feet," says one of them, Anthony Dalaber, "and with tears and sighs besought him that for the tender mercy of God he should not refuse me, saying that I trusted verily that he who had begun this on me would not forsake me, but would give me grace to continue therein to the end. When he heard me say so he came to me, took me in his arms, and kissed me, saying, 'The Lord God Almighty grant you so to do, and from henceforth ever take me for your father, and I will take you for my son in Christ.'"

In 1528 the excitement which followed on this rapid diffusion of Tyndale's works forced Wolsey to more vigorous action; many of the Oxford Brethren were thrown into prison and their books seized. But in spite of the panic of the Protestants, some of whom fled over sea, little severity was really exercised. Henry's chief anxiety indeed was lest in the outburst against heresy the interest of the New Learning should suffer harm.

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Wolsey.

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Latimer.

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This was remarkably shown in the protection he extended to one who was destined to eclipse even the fame of Colet as a popular preacher. Hugh Latimer was the son of a Leicestershire yeoman, whose armour the boy had buckled on in Henry the Seventh's days ere he set out to meet the Cornish insurgents at Blackheath field. Latimer has himself described the soldierly training of his youth. "My father was delighted to teach me to shoot with the bow. He taught me how to draw, how to lay my body to the bow, not to draw with strength of arm as other nations do but with the strength of the body." At fourteen he was at Cambridge, flinging himself into the New Learning which was winning its way there with a zeal that at last told on his physical strength. The ardour of his mental efforts left its mark on him in ailments and enfeebled health from which, vigorous as he was, his frame never wholly freed itself. But he was destined to be known, not as a scholar, but as a preacher. In his addresses from the pulpit the sturdy good sense of the man shook off the pedantry of the schools as well as the subtlety of the theologian. He had little turn for speculation, and in the religious changes of the day we find him constantly lagging behind his brother reformers. But he had the moral earnestness of a Jewish prophet, and his denunciations of wrong had a prophetic directness and fire. "Have pity on your soul," he cried to Henry, "and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed by your sword." His irony was yet more telling than his invective. "I would ask you a strange question;" he said once at Paul's Cross to a ring of Bishops, "who is the most diligent prelate in all England, that passeth all the rest in doing of his office? I will tell you. It is the Devil! of all the pack of them that have cure, the Devil shall go for my money; for he ordereth his business. Therefore, you unpreaching prelates, learn of the Devil to be diligent in your office. If you will not learn of God, for shame

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learn of the Devil." But Latimer was far from limiting himself to invective. His homely humour breaks in with story and apologue; his earnestness is always tempered with good sense; his plain and simple style quickens with a shrewd mother-wit. He talks to his hearers as a man talks to his friends, telling stories such as we have given of his own life at home, or chatting about the changes and chances of the day with a transparent simplicity and truth that raises even his chat into grandeur. His theme is always the actual world about him, and in his simple lessons of loyalty, of industry, of pity for the poor, he touches upon almost every subject from the plough to the throne. No such preaching had been heard in England before his day, and with the growth of his fame grew the danger of persecution. There were moments when, bold as he was, Latimer's heart failed him. "If I had not trust that God will help me," he wrote once, "I think the ocean sea would have divided my Lord of London and me by this day." A citation for heresy at last brought the danger home. "I intend," he wrote with his peculiar medley of humour and pathos, "to make merry with my parishioners this Christmas, for all the sorrow, lest perchance I may never return to them again." But he was saved throughout by the steady protection of the Court. Wolsey upheld him against the threats of the Bishop of Ely; Henry made him his own chaplain; and the King's interposition at this critical moment forced Latimer's judges to content themselves with a few vague words of submission.

What really sheltered the reforming movement was Wolsey's indifference to all but political matters. In spite of the foundation of Cardinal College in which he was now engaged, and of the suppression of some lesser monasteries for its endowment, the men of the New Learning looked on him as really devoid of any interest in the revival of letters or in their hopes of a general enlightenment. He took hardly more heed of the new Lutheranism.

Anne
 Boleyn.

CHAP. III. His mind had no religious turn, and the quarrel of faiths was with him simply one factor in the political game which he was carrying on and which at this moment became more complex and absorbing than ever. The victory of Pavia had ruined that system of balance which Henry the Seventh and in his earlier days Henry the Eighth had striven to preserve. But the ruin had not been to England's profit, but to the profit of its ally. While the Emperor stood supreme in Europe Henry had won nothing from the war, and it was plain that Charles meant him to win nothing. He set aside all projects of a joint invasion; he broke his pledge to wed Mary Tudor and married a princess of Portugal; he pressed for a peace with France which would give him Burgundy. It was time for Henry and his minister to change their course. They resolved to withdraw from all active part in the rivalry of the two powers. In June, 1525, a treaty was secretly concluded with France. But Henry remained on fair terms with the Emperor; and though England joined the Holy League for the deliverance of Italy from the Spaniards which was formed between France, the Pope, and the lesser Italian states on the release of Francis in the spring of 1526 by virtue of a treaty which he at once repudiated, she took no part in the lingering war which went on across the Alps. Charles was too prudent to resent Henry's alliance with his foes, and from this moment the country remained virtually at peace. No longer spurred by the interest of great events, the King ceased to take a busy part in foreign politics, and gave himself to hunting and sport. Among the fairest and gayest ladies of his court stood Anne Boleyn. She was sprung of a merchant family which had but lately risen to distinction through two great marriages, that of her grandfather with the heiress of the Earls of Ormond, and that of her father, Sir Thomas Boleyn, with a sister of the Duke of Norfolk. It was probably through his kinship with the Duke, who was

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now Lord Treasurer and high in the King's confidence, that Boleyn was employed throughout Henry's reign in state business, and his diplomatic abilities had secured his appointment as envoy both to France and to the Emperor. His son, George Boleyn, a man of culture and a poet, was among the group of young courtiers in whose society Henry took most pleasure. Anne was his youngest daughter; born in 1507, she was still but a girl of fifteen when the outbreak of war drew her from a stay in France to the English court. Her beauty was small, but her bright eyes, her flowing hair, her gaiety and wit, soon won favour with the King, and only a month after her return in 1522 the grant of honours to her father marked her influence over Henry. Fresh gifts in the following years showed that the favour continued; but in 1524 a new colour was given to this intimacy by a resolve on the King's part to break his marriage with the Queen. Catharine had now reached middle age; her personal charms had departed. The death of every child save Mary may have woke scruples as to the lawfulness of a marriage on which a curse seemed to rest; the need of a male heir for public security may have deepened this impression. But whatever were the grounds of his action we find Henry from this moment pressing the Roman see to grant him a divorce.

It is probable that the matter was already mooted in 1525, a year which saw new proof of Anne's influence in the elevation of Sir Thomas Boleyn to the baronage as Lord Rochford. It is certain that it was the object of secret negotiation with the Pope in 1526. No sovereign stood higher in the favour of Rome than Henry, whose alliance had ever been ready in its distress and who was even now prompt with aid in money. But Clement's consent to his wish meant a break with the Emperor, Catharine's nephew; and the exhaustion of France, the weakness of the league in which the lesser Italian states strove to maintain their independence against Charles after the

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*The
Divorce.*

CHAP. III. battle of Pavia, left the Pope at the Emperor's mercy. While
 Wolsey. the English envoy was mooting the question of divorce in
 1514-1529. 1526 the surprize of Rome by an Imperial force brought home to Clement his utter helplessness. It is hard to discover what part Wolsey had as yet taken in the matter or whether as in other cases Henry had till now been acting alone, though the Cardinal himself tells us that on Catharine's first discovery of the intrigue she attributed the proposal of divorce to "my procurement and setting forth." But from this point his intervention is clear. As legate he took cognizance of all matrimonial causes, and in May 1527 a collusive action was brought in his court against Henry for cohabiting with his brother's wife. The King appeared by proctor; but the suit was suddenly dropped. Secret as were the proceedings, they had now reached Catharine's ear; and as she refused to admit the facts on which Henry rested his case her appeal would have carried the matter to the tribunal of the Pope, and Clement's decision could hardly be a favourable one.

Wolsey and the Divorce.

The Pope was now in fact a prisoner in the Emperor's hands. At the very moment of the suit Rome was stormed and sacked by the army of the Duke of Bourbon. "If the Pope's holiness fortune either to be slain or taken," Wolsey wrote to the King when the news of this event reached England, "it shall not a little hinder your Grace's affairs." But it was needful for the Cardinal to find some expedient to carry out the King's will, for the group around Anne were using her skilfully for their purposes. A great party had now gathered to her support. Her uncle, the Duke of Norfolk, an able and ambitious man, counted on her rise to set him at the head of the council-board; the brilliant group of young courtiers to which her brother belonged saw in her success their own elevation; and the Duke of Suffolk with the bulk of the nobles hoped through her means to bring about the ruin of the statesman before whom they trembled. What most served their plans was the growth of Henry's passion. "If it please you,"

the King wrote at this time to Anne Boleyn, "to do the office of a true, loyal mistress, and give yourself body and heart to me, who have been and mean to be your loyal servant, I promise you not only the name but that I shall make you my sole mistress, remove all others from my affection, and serve you only." What stirred Henry's wrath most was Catharine's "stiff and obstinate" refusal to bow to his will. Wolsey's advice that "your Grace should handle her both gently and doulcely" only goaded Henry's impatience. He lent an ear to the rivals who charged his minister with slackness in the cause, and danger drove the Cardinal to a bolder and yet more unscrupulous device. The entire subjection of Italy to the Emperor was drawing closer the French alliance; and a new treaty had been concluded in April. But this had hardly been signed when the sack of Rome and the danger of the Pope called for bolder measures. Wolsey was despatched on a solemn embassy to Francis to promise an English subsidy on the despatch of a French army across the Alps. But he aimed at turning the Pope's situation to the profit of the divorce. Clement was virtually a prisoner in the Castle of St. Angelo; and as it was impossible for him to fulfil freely the function of a Pope, Wolsey proposed in conjunction with Francis to call a meeting of the College of Cardinals at Avignon which should exercise the papal powers till Clement's liberation. As Wolsey was to preside over this assembly, it would be easy to win from it a favourable answer to Henry's request.

But Clement had no mind to surrender his power, and secret orders from the Pope prevented the Italian Cardinals from attending such an assembly. Nor was Wolsey more fortunate in another plan for bringing about the same end by inducing Clement to delegate to him his full powers westward of the Alps. Henry's trust in him was fast waning before these failures and the steady pressure of his rivals at court, and the coldness of the King on his return in September was an omen of his minister's fall. Henry

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Wolsey.

1514-1529.

The Legatine Commission.

CHAP. III. was in fact resolved to take his own course; and while
 Wolsey. Wolsey sought from the Pope a commission enabling
 1514- him to try the case in his legatine court and pronounce
 1529. the marriage null and void by sentence of law, Henry
 had determined at the suggestion of the Boleyns and
 apparently of Thomas Cranmer, a Cambridge scholar who
 was serving as their chaplain, to seek without Wolsey's
 knowledge from Clement either his approval of a divorce,
 or if a divorce could not be obtained a dispensation to
 re-marry without any divorce at all. For some months
 his envoys could find no admission to the Pope; and
 though in December Clement succeeded in escaping to
 Orvieto and drew some courage from the entry of the
 French army into Italy, his temper was still too timid to
 venture on any decided course. He refused the dispensa-
 tion altogether. Wolsey's proposal for leaving the matter
 to a legatine court found better favour; but when the
 commission reached England it was found to be "of no
 effect or authority." What Henry wanted was not merely
 a divorce but the express sanction of the Pope to his
 divorce, and this Clement steadily evaded. A fresh embassy
 with Wolsey's favourite and secretary, Stephen Gardiner,
 at its head reached Orvieto in March 1528 to find in
 spite of Gardiner's threats hardly better success; but
 Clement at last consented to a legatine commission for
 the trial of the case in England. In this commission
 Cardinal Campeggio, who was looked upon as a partizan
 of the English King, was joined with Wolsey.

*The
 Papal
 diffi-
 culties.*

Great as the concession seemed, this gleam of success
 failed to hide from the minister the dangers which gathered
 round him. The great nobles whom he had practically
 shut out from the King's counsels were longing for his fall.
 The Boleyns and the young courtiers looked on him as cool
 in Anne's cause. He was hated alike by men of the old
 doctrine and men of the new. The clergy had never for-
 gotten his extortions, the monks saw him suppressing small
 monasteries. The foundation of Cardinal College failed to

reconcile to him the scholars of the New Learning; their
 poet, Skelton, was among his bitterest assailants. The Pro-
 testants, goaded by the persecution of this very year, hated
 him with a deadly hatred. His French alliances, his de-
 claration of war with the Emperor, hindered the trade with
 Flanders and secured the hostility of the merchant class.
 The country at large, galled with murrain and famine and
 panic-struck by an outbreak of the sweating sickness which
 carried off two thousand in London alone, laid all its suffer-
 ing at the door of the Cardinal. And now that Henry's
 mood itself became uncertain Wolsey knew his hour was
 come. Were the marriage once made, he told the French am-
 bassador, and a male heir born to the realm, he would with-
 draw from state affairs and serve God for the rest of his life.
 But the divorce had still to be brought about ere marriage
 could be made or heir be born. Henry indeed had seized
 on the grant of a commission as if the matter were at an
 end. Anne Boleyn was installed in the royal palace, and
 honoured with the state of a wife. The new legate, Cam-
 peggio, held the bishopric of Salisbury, and had been asked
 for as judge from the belief that he would favour the King's
 cause. But he bore secret instructions from the Pope to
 bring about if possible a reconciliation between Henry and
 the Queen, and in no case to pronounce sentence without
 reference to Rome. The slowness of his journey presaged
 ill; he did not reach England till the end of September,
 and a month was wasted in vain efforts to bring Henry to
 a reconciliation or Catharine to retirement into a monastery.
 A new difficulty disclosed itself in the supposed existence
 of a brief issued by Pope Julius and now in the possession
 of the Emperor, which overruled all the objections to the
 earlier dispensation on which Henry relied. The hearing
 of the cause was delayed through the winter, while new
 embassies strove to induce Clement to declare this brief
 also invalid. Not only was such a demand glaringly unjust,
 but the progress of the Imperial arms brought vividly home
 to the Pope its injustice. The danger which he feared was

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CHAP. III. not merely a danger to his temporal domain in Italy. It was a danger to the Papacy itself. It was in vain that new embassies threatened Clement with the loss of his spiritual power over England. To break with the Emperor was to risk the loss of his spiritual power over a far larger world. Charles had already consented to the suspension of the judgement of his diet at Worms, a consent which gave security to the new Protestantism in North Germany. If he burned heretics in the Netherlands, he employed them in his armies. Lutheran soldiers had played their part in the sack of Rome. Lutheranism had spread from North Germany along the Rhine, it was now pushing fast into the hereditary possessions of the Austrian house, it had all but mastered the Low Countries. France itself was mined with heresy; and were Charles once to give way, the whole continent would be lost to Rome.

*The Trial
of the
Divorce.*

Amidst difficulties such as these the Papal court saw no course open save one of delay. But the long delay told fatally for Wolsey's fortunes. Even Clement blamed him for having hindered Henry from judging the matter in his own realm and marrying on the sentence of his own courts, and the Boleyns naturally looked upon his policy as dictated by hatred to Anne. Norfolk and the great peers took courage from the bitter tone of the girl; and Henry himself charged the Cardinal with a failure in fulfilling the promises he had made him. King and minister still clung indeed passionately to their hopes from Rome. But in 1529 Charles met their pressure with a pressure of his own; and the progress of his arms decided Clement to avoke the cause to Rome. Wolsey could only hope to anticipate this decision by pushing the trial hastily forward, and at the end of May the two Legates opened their court in the great hall of the Blackfriars. King and Queen were cited to appear before them when the court again met on the eighteenth of June. Henry briefly announced his resolve to live no longer in mortal sin. The Queen offered an appeal to Clement, and on the refusal of the Legates to admit it flung

herself at Henry's feet, "Sire," said Catharine, "I beseech you to pity me, a woman and a stranger, without an assured friend and without an indifferent counsellor. I take God to witness that I have always been to you a true and loyal wife, that I have made it my constant duty to seek your pleasure, that I have loved all whom you loved, whether I have reason or not, whether they are friends to me or foes. I have been your wife for years; I have brought you many children. God knows that when I came to your bed I was a virgin, and I put it to your own conscience to say whether it was not so. If there be any offence which can be alleged against me I consent to depart with infamy; if not, then I pray you to do me justice." The piteous appeal was wasted on a King who was already entertaining Anne Boleyn with royal state in his own palace; the trial proceeded, and on the twenty-third of July the court assembled to pronounce sentence. Henry's hopes were at their highest when they were suddenly dashed to the ground. At the opening of the proceedings Campeggio rose to declare the court adjourned to the following October.

The adjournment was a mere evasion. The pressure of the Imperialists had at last forced Clement to summon the cause to his own tribunal at Rome, and the jurisdiction of the Legates was at an end. "Now see I," cried the Duke of Suffolk as he dashed his hand on the table, "that the old saw is true, that there was never Legate or Cardinal that did good to England!" The Duke only echoed his master's wrath. Through the twenty years of his reign Henry had known nothing of opposition to his will. His imperious temper had chafed at the weary negotiations, the subtleties and perfidies of the Pope. Though the commission was his own device, his pride must have been sorely galled by the summons to the Legates' court. The warmest adherents of the older faith revolted against the degradation of the crown. "It was the strangest and newest sight and device," says Cavendish, "that ever we read or heard of in any history or chronicle in any region that a King and

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*Henry's
wrath.*

CHAP. III. Queen should be convented and constrained by process
 Wolsey. compellatory to appear in any court as common persons,
 1514-1529. within their own realm and dominion, to abide the judgement and decree of their own subjects, having the royal diadem and prerogative thereof." Even this degradation had been borne in vain. Foreign and Papal tribunal as that of the Legates really was, it lay within Henry's kingdom and had the air of an English court. But the citation to Rome was a summons to the King to plead in a court without his realm. Wolsey had himself warned Clement of the hopelessness of expecting Henry to submit to such humiliation as this. "If the King be cited to appear in person or by proxy and his prerogative be interfered with, none of his subjects will tolerate the insult. . . . To cite the King to Rome, to threaten him with excommunication, is no more tolerable than to deprive him of his royal dignity. . . . If he were to appear in Italy it would be at the head of a formidable army." But Clement had been deaf to the warning, and the case had been avoked out of the realm.

Wolsey's fall. Henry's wrath fell at once on Wolsey. Whatever furtherance or hindrance the Cardinal had given to his re-marriage, it was Wolsey who had dissuaded him from acting at the first independently, from conducting the cause in his own courts and acting on the sentence of his own judges. Whether to secure the succession by a more indisputable decision or to preserve uninjured the prerogatives of the Papal see, it was Wolsey who had counselled him to seek a divorce from Rome and promised him success in his suit. And in this counsel Wolsey stood alone. Even Clement had urged the King to carry out his original purpose when it was too late. All that the Pope sought was to be freed from the necessity of meddling in the matter at all. It was Wolsey who had forced Papal intervention on him, as he had forced it on Henry, and the failure of his plans was fatal to him. From the close of the Legatine court Henry would see him no more, and his favourite, Stephen Gardiner, who had become chief Secretary

of State, succeeded him in the King's confidence. If
 Wolsey still remained minister for a while, it was because
 the thread of the complex foreign negotiations which he was
 conducting could not be roughly broken. Here too however
 failure awaited him. His diplomacy sought to bring fresh
 pressure on the Pope and to provide a fresh check on the
 Emperor by a closer alliance with France. But Francis
 was anxious to recover his children who had remained as
 hostages for his return; he was weary of the long struggle,
 and hopeless of aid from his Italian allies. At this crisis
 of his fate therefore Wolsey saw himself deceived and
 outwitted by the conclusion of peace between France and
 the Emperor in a new treaty at Cambray. Not only was
 his French policy no longer possible, but a reconciliation
 with Charles was absolutely needful, and such a reconciliation
 could only be brought about by Wolsey's fall. In October, on the very day that the Cardinal took his place
 with a haughty countenance and all his former pomp in
 the Court of Chancery, an indictment was preferred
 against him by the King's attorney for receiving bulls from
 Rome in violation of the Statute of Provisors. A few
 days later he was deprived of the seals. Wolsey was
 prostrated by the blow. In a series of abject appeals he
 offered to give up everything that he possessed if the King
 would but cease from his displeasure. "His face," wrote
 the French ambassador, "is dwindled to half its natural size.
 In truth his misery is such that his enemies, Englishmen
 as they are, cannot help pitying him." For the moment
 Henry seemed contented with his disgrace. A thousand
 boats full of Londoners covered the Thames to see the
 Cardinal's barge pass to the Tower, but he was permitted
 to retire to Esher. Although judgement of forfeiture and
 imprisonment was given against him in the King's Bench
 at the close of October, in the following February he received a pardon on surrender of his vast possessions to
 the Crown and was permitted to withdraw to his diocese of
 York, the one dignity he had been suffered to retain.

CHAPTER IV.

THOMAS CROMWELL.

1529—1540.

The new Despotism. THE ten years which follow the fall of Wolsey are among the most momentous in our history. The Monarchy at last realized its power, and the work for which Wolsey had paved the way was carried out with a terrible thoroughness. The one great institution which could still offer resistance to the royal will was struck down. The Church became a mere instrument of the central despotism. The people learned their helplessness in rebellions easily suppressed and avenged with ruthless severity. A reign of terror, organized with consummate and merciless skill, held England panic-stricken at Henry's feet. The noblest heads rolled from the block. Virtue and learning could not save Thomas More; royal descent could not save Lady Salisbury. The putting away of one queen, the execution of another, taught England that nothing was too high for Henry's "courage" or too sacred for his "appetite." Parliament assembled only to sanction acts of unscrupulous tyranny, or to build up by its own statutes the fabric of absolute rule. All the constitutional safeguards of English freedom were swept away. Arbitrary taxation, arbitrary legislation, arbitrary imprisonment were powers claimed without dispute and unsparingly used by the Crown.

The history of this great revolution, for it is nothing less, is the history of a single man. In the whole line of

English statesmen there is no one of whom we would willingly know so much, no one of whom we really know so little, as of Thomas Cromwell. When he meets us in Henry's service he had already passed middle life; and during his earlier years it is hardly possible to do more than disentangle a few fragmentary facts from the mass of fable which gathered round them. His youth was one of roving adventure. Whether he was the son of a poor blacksmith at Putney or no, he could hardly have been more than a boy when he was engaged in the service of the Marchioness of Dorset, and he must still have been young when he took part as a common soldier in the wars of Italy, a "ruffian," as he owned afterwards to Cranmer, in the most unscrupulous school the world contained. But it was a school in which he learned lessons even more dangerous than those of the camp. He not only mastered the Italian language but drank in the manners and tone of the Italy around him, the Italy of the Borgias and the Medici. It was with Italian versatility that he turned from the camp to the counting-house; he was certainly engaged as a commercial agent to one of the Venetian traders; tradition finds him as a clerk at Antwerp; and in 1512 history at last encounters him as a thriving wool merchant at Middelburg in Zealand.

Returning to England, Cromwell continued to amass wealth as years went on by adding the trade of scrivener, something between that of a banker and attorney, to his other occupations, as well as by advancing money to the poorer nobles; and on the outbreak of the second war with France we find him a busy and influential member of the Commons in Parliament. Five years later, in 1528, the aim of his ambition was declared by his entering into Wolsey's service. The Cardinal needed a man of business for the suppression of the smaller monasteries which he had undertaken as well as for the transfer of their revenues to his foundations at Oxford and Ipswich, and he showed his usual skill in the choice of men by finding such an

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agent in Cromwell. The task was an unpopular one, and it was carried out with a rough indifference to the feelings it aroused which involved Cromwell in the hate that was gathering round his master. But his wonderful self-reliance and sense of power only broke upon the world at Wolsey's fall. Of the hundreds of dependants who waited on the Cardinal's nod, Cromwell, hated and in danger as he must have known himself to be, was the only one who clung to his master at the last. In the lonely hours of his disgrace at Esher Wolsey "made his moan unto Master Cromwell, who comforted him the best he could, and desired my Lord to give him leave to go to London, where he would make or mar, which was always his common saying." His plan was to purchase not only his master's safety but his own. Wolsey was persuaded to buy off the hostility of the courtiers by giving his personal confirmation to the prodigal grants of pensions and annuities which had been already made from his revenues, while Cromwell acquired importance as the go-between in these transactions. "Then began both noblemen and others who had patents from the King," for grants from the Cardinal's estate, "to make earnest suit to Master Cromwell for to solicit their causes, and for his pains therein they promised not only to reward him, but to show him such pleasure as should be in their power." But if Cromwell showed his consummate craft in thus serving himself as well as his master, he can have had no personal reasons for the stand he made in the Parliament which was summoned in November against a bill for disqualifying the Cardinal for all after employment, which was introduced by Norfolk and More. It was by Cromwell that this was defeated and it was by him that the negotiations were conducted which permitted the fallen minister to withdraw pardoned to York.

The Howards. A general esteem seems to have rewarded this rare instance of fidelity to a ruined patron. "For his honest behaviour in his master's cause he was esteemed the most faithfulest servant, and was of all men greatly com-

mended." Cromwell however had done more than save himself from ruin. The negotiations for Wolsey's pensions had given him access to the King, and "by his witty demeanour he grew continually in the King's favour." But the favour had been won by more than "witty demeanour." In a private interview with Henry Cromwell boldly advised him to cut the knot of the divorce by the simple exercise of his own supremacy. The advice struck the key-note of the later policy by which the daring counsellor was to change the whole face of Church and State; but Henry still clung to the hopes held out by the new ministers who had followed Wolsey, and shrank perhaps as yet from the bare absolutism to which Cromwell called him. The advice at any rate was concealed; and, though high in the King's favour, his new servant waited patiently the progress of events.

The first result of Wolsey's fall was a marked change in the system of administration. Both the Tudor Kings had carried on their government mainly through the agency of great ecclesiastics. Archbishop Morton and Bishop Fox had been successively ministers of Henry the Seventh. Wolsey had been the minister of Henry the Eighth. But with the ruin of the Cardinal the rule of the churchmen ceased. The seals were given to Sir Thomas More. The real direction of affairs lay in the hands of two great nobles, of the Duke of Suffolk who was President of the Council, and of the Lord Treasurer, Thomas Howard, the Duke of Norfolk. From this hour to the close of the age of the Tudors the Howards were to play a prominent part in English history. They had originally sprung from the circle of lawyers who rose to wealth and honour through their employment by the crown. Their earliest known ancestor was a judge under Edward the First; and his descendants remained wealthy landowners in the eastern counties till early in the fifteenth century they were suddenly raised to distinction by the marriage of Sir Robert Howard with a wife who became heiress of the

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houses of Arundel and Norfolk, the Fitz-Alans and the Mowbrays. John Howard, the issue of this marriage, was a prominent Yorkist and stood high in the favour of the Yorkist kings. He was one of the councillors of Edward the Fourth, and received from Richard the Third the old dignities of the house of Mowbray, the office of Earl Marshal and the Dukedom of Norfolk. But he had hardly risen to greatness when he fell fighting by Richard's side at Bosworth Field. His son was taken prisoner in the same battle and remained for three years in the Tower. But his refusal to join in the rising of the Earl of Lincoln was rewarded by Henry the Seventh with his release, his restoration to the Earldom of Surrey, and his employment in the service of the crown where he soon took rank among the king's most trusted councillors. His military abilities were seen in campaigns against the Scots which won back for him the office of Earl Marshal, and in the victory of Flodden which restored to him the Dukedom of Norfolk. The son of this victor of Flodden, Thomas, Earl of Surrey, had already served as lieutenant in Ireland and as general against Albany on the Scottish frontier before his succession to the dukedom in 1524. His coolness and tact had displayed themselves during the revolt against Benevolences, when his influence alone averted a rising in the Eastern Counties. Since Buckingham's death his house stood at the head of the English nobility: his office of Lord Treasurer placed him high at the royal council board; and Henry's love for his niece, Anne Boleyn, gave a fresh spur to the duke's ambition. But his influence had till now been over-shadowed by the greatness of Wolsey. With the Cardinal's fall however he at once came to the front. Though he had bowed to the royal policy, he was known as the leader of the party which clung to alliance with the Emperor, and now that such an alliance was needful Henry counted on Norfolk to renew the friendship with Charles.

*The Par-
liament.*

An even greater revolution was seen in the summons of a Parliament which met in November 1529. Its assembly

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was no doubt prompted in part by the actual needs of the Crown, for Henry was not only penniless but overwhelmed with debts and Parliament alone could give him freedom from these embarrassments. But the importance of the questions brought before the Houses, and their repeated assembly throughout the rest of Henry's reign, point to a definite change in the royal system. The policy of Edward the Fourth, of Henry the Seventh, and of Wolsey was abandoned. Instead of looking on Parliament as a danger the monarchy now felt itself strong enough to use it as a tool. The obedience of the Commons was seen in the readiness with which they at once passed a bill to release the crown from its debts. But Henry counted on more than obedience. He counted, and justly counted, on the warm support of the Houses in his actual strife with Rome. The plan of a divorce was no doubt unpopular. So violent was the indignation against Anne Boleyn that she hardly dared to stir abroad. But popular feeling ran almost as bitterly against the Papacy. The sight of an English King and an English Queen pleading before a foreign tribunal revived the old resentment against the subjection of Englishmen to Papal courts. The helplessness of Clement in the grasp of the Emperor recalled the helplessness of the Popes at Avignon in the grasp of the Kings of France. That Henry should sue for justice to Rome was galling enough, but the hottest adherent of the Papacy was outraged when the suit of his King was granted or refused at the will of Charles. It was against this degradation of the Crown that the Statutes of Provisors and Præmunire had been long since aimed. The need of Papal support to their disputed title which had been felt by the Houses of Lancaster and York had held these statutes in suspense, and the Legatine Court of Wolsey had openly defied them. They were still however legally in force; they were part of the Parliamentary tradition; and it was certain that Parliament would be as ready as ever to enforce the independent jurisdiction of the Crown.

CHAP. IV. Not less significant was the attitude of the New Learning. On Wolsey's fall the seals had been offered to Warham, and it was probably at his counsel that they were finally given to Sir Thomas More. The chancellor's dream, if we may judge it from the acts of his brief ministry, seems to have been that of carrying out the religious reformation which had been demanded by Colet and Erasmus while checking the spirit of revolt against the unity of the Church. His severities against the Protestants, exaggerated as they have been by polemic rancour, remain the one stain on a memory that knows no other. But it was only by a rigid severance of the cause of reform from what seemed to him the cause of revolution that More could hope for a successful issue to the projects of reform which the council laid before Parliament. The Petition of the Commons sounded like an echo of Colet's famous address to the Convocation. It attributed the growth of heresy not more to "frantic and seditious books published in the English tongue contrary to the very true Catholic and Christian faith" than to "the extreme and uncharitable behaviour of divers ordinaries." It remonstrated against the legislation of the clergy in Convocation without the King's assent or that of his subjects, the oppressive procedure of the Church Courts, the abuses of ecclesiastical patronage, and the excessive number of holydays. Henry referred the Petition to the bishops, but they could devise no means of redress, and the ministry persisted in pushing through the Houses their bills for ecclesiastical reform. The importance of the new measures lay really in the action of Parliament. They were an explicit announcement that church-reform was now to be undertaken, not by the clergy, but by the people at large. On the other hand it was clear that it would be carried out in a spirit of loyalty to the church. The Commons forced from Bishop Fisher an apology for words which were taken as a doubt thrown on their orthodoxy. Henry forbade the circulation of

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*Hopes of
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Learning.*

Tyndale's translation of the Bible as executed in a Protestant spirit. The reforming measures however were pushed resolutely on. Though the questions of Convocation and the Bishops' courts were adjourned for further consideration, the fees of the courts were curtailed, the clergy restricted from lay employments, pluralities restrained, and residence enforced. In spite of a dogged opposition from the bishops the bills received the assent of the House of Lords, "to the great rejoicing of lay people, and the great displeasure of spiritual persons."

Not less characteristic of the New Learning was the intellectual pressure it strove to bring to bear on the wavering Pope. Cranmer was still active in the cause of Anne Boleyn; he had just published a book in favour of the divorce; and he now urged on the ministry an appeal to the learned opinion of Christendom by calling for the judgement of the chief universities of Europe. His counsel was adopted; but Norfolk trusted to coarser means of attaining his end. Like most of the English nobles and the whole of the merchant class, his sympathies were with the House of Burgundy; he looked upon Wolsey as the real hindrance to the divorce through the French policy which had driven Charles into a hostile attitude; and he counted on the Cardinal's fall to bring about a renewal of friendship with the Emperor and to ensure his support. The father of Anne Boleyn, now created Earl of Wiltshire, was sent in 1530 on this errand to the Imperial Court. But Charles remained firm to Catharine's cause, and Clement would do nothing in defiance of the Emperor. Nor was the appeal to the learned world more successful. In France the profuse bribery of the English agents would have failed with the university of Paris but for the interference of Francis himself, eager to regain Henry's goodwill by this office of friendship. As shameless an exercise of the King's own authority was needed to wring an approval of his cause from Oxford and Cambridge. In Germany the very Protestants, then in the fervour of their moral revival

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*Death of
Wolsey.*

CHAP. IV. and hoping little from a proclaimed opponent of Luther, were dead against the King. So far as could be seen from Thomas Cranmer's test every learned man in Christendom but for bribery and threats would have condemned the royal cause. Henry was embittered by failures which he attributed to the unskilful diplomacy of his new counsellors; and it was rumoured that he had been heard to regret the loss of the more dexterous statesman whom they had overthrown. Wolsey who since the beginning of the year had remained at York, though busy in appearance with the duties of his see, was hoping more and more as the months passed by for his recall. But the jealousy of his political enemies was roused by the King's regrets, and the pitiless hand of Norfolk was seen in the quick and deadly blow which he dealt at his fallen rival. On the fourth of November, on the eve of his installation feast, the Cardinal was arrested on a charge of high treason and conducted by the Lieutenant of the Tower towards London. Already broken by his enormous labours, by internal disease, and the sense of his fall, Wolsey accepted the arrest as a sentence of death. An attack of dysentery forced him to rest at the abbey of Leicester, and as he reached the gate he said feebly to the brethren who met him, "I am come to lay my bones among you." On his death-bed his thoughts still clung to the prince whom he had served. "Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the king," murmured the dying man, "He would not have given me over in my grey hairs. But this is my due reward for my pains and study, not regarding my service to God, but only my duty to my prince."

Cromwell's policy. No words could paint with so terrible a truthfulness the spirit of the new despotism which Wolsey had done more than any of those who went before him to build up. From tempers like his all sense of loyalty to England, to its freedom, to its institutions, had utterly passed away, and the one duty which the statesman owned was a duty to his "prince." To what issues such a conception of a

statesman's duty might lead was now to be seen in the career of a greater than Wolsey. The two dukes had struck down the Cardinal only to set up another master in his room. Since his interview with Henry Cromwell had remained in the King's service, where his steady advance in the royal favour was marked by his elevation to the post of secretary of state. His patience was at last rewarded by the failure of the policy for which his own had been set aside. At the close of 1530 the college of cardinals formally rejected the King's request for leave to decide the whole matter in his own spiritual courts; and the defeat of Norfolk's project drove Henry nearer and nearer to the bold plan from which he had shrunk at Wolsey's fall. Cromwell was again ready with his suggestion that the King should disavow the Papal jurisdiction, declare himself Head of the Church within his realm, and obtain a divorce from his own Ecclesiastical Courts. But he looked on the divorce as simply the prelude to a series of changes which the new minister was bent upon accomplishing. In all his chequered life what had left its deepest stamp on him was Italy. Not only in the rapidity and ruthlessness of his designs, but in their larger scope, their clearer purpose, and their admirable combination, the Italian state-craft entered with Cromwell into English politics. He is in fact the first English minister in whom we can trace through the whole period of his rule the steady working out of a great and definite aim, that of raising the King to absolute authority on the ruins of every rival power within the realm. It was not that Cromwell was a mere slave of tyranny. Whether we may trust the tale that carries him in his youth to Florence or no, his statesmanship was closely modelled on the ideal of the Florentine thinker whose book was constantly in his hand. Even as a servant of Wolsey he startled the future Cardinal, Reginald Pole, by bidding him take for his manual in politics the "Prince" of Machiavelli. Machiavelli hoped to find in Caesar

CHAP. IV. Borgia or in the later Lorenzo de' Medici a tyrant who after crushing all rival tyrannies might unite and regenerate Italy; and terrible and ruthless as his policy was, the final aim of Cromwell seems to have been that of Machiavelli, an aim of securing enlightenment and order for England by the concentration of all authority in the crown.

The Headship of the Church. The first step towards such an end was the freeing the monarchy from its spiritual obedience to Rome. What the first of the Tudors had done for the political independence of the kingdom, the second was to do for its ecclesiastical independence. Henry the Seventh had freed England from the interference of France or the House of Burgundy; and in the question of the divorce Cromwell saw the means of bringing Henry the Eighth to free it from the interference of the Papacy. In such an effort resistance could be looked for only from the clergy. But their resistance was what Cromwell desired. The last check on royal absolutism which had survived the Wars of the Roses lay in the wealth, the independent synods and jurisdiction, and the religious claims of the church; and for the success of the new policy it was necessary to reduce the great ecclesiastical body to a mere department of the State in which all authority should flow from the sovereign alone, his will be the only law, his decision the only test of truth. Such a change however was hardly to be wrought without a struggle; and the question of national independence in all ecclesiastical matters furnished ground on which the crown could conduct this struggle to the best advantage. The secretary's first blow showed how unscrupulously the struggle was to be waged. A year had passed since Wolsey had been convicted of a breach of the Statute of Provisors. The pedantry of the judges declared the whole nation to have been formally involved in the same charge by its acceptance of his authority. The legal absurdity was now redressed by a general pardon, but from this pardon the clergy found themselves omitted. In the spring of 1531 Convocation

was assembled to be told that forgiveness could be bought at no less a price than the payment of a fine amounting to a million of our present money, and the acknowledgment of the King as "the chief protector, the only and supreme lord, and Head of the Church and Clergy of England." Unjust as was the first demand, they at once submitted to it; against the second they struggled hard. But their appeals to Henry and Cromwell met only with demands for instant obedience. A compromise was at last arrived at by the insertion of a qualifying phrase "So far as the law of Christ will allow;" and with this addition the words were again submitted by Warham to the Convocation. There was a general silence. "Whoever is silent seems to consent," said the Archbishop. "Then are we all silent," replied a voice from among the crowd.

There is no ground for thinking that the "Headship of the Church" which Henry claimed in this submission was more than a warning addressed to the independent spirit of the clergy, or that it bore as yet the meaning which was afterwards attached to it. It certainly implied no independence of Rome, for negotiations were still being carried on with the Papal Court. But it told Clement plainly that in any strife that might come between himself and Henry the clergy were in the King's hand, and that he must look for no aid from them in any struggle with the crown. The warning was backed by an address to the Pope from the Lords and some of the Commons who assembled after a fresh prorogation of the Houses in the spring. "The cause of his Majesty," the Peers were made to say, "is the cause of each of ourselves." They laid before the Pope what they represented as the judgement of the Universities in favour of the divorce; but they faced boldly the event of its rejection. "Our condition," they ended, "will not be wholly irremediable. Extreme remedies are ever harsh of application; but he that is sick will by all means be rid of his distemper." In the summer the banishment of Catharine from the King's palace to a house at Amptill

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Catharine
put away.

CHAP. IV. showed the firmness of Henry's resolve. Each of these acts were no doubt intended to tell on the Pope's decision, for Henry still clung to the hope of extorting from Clement a favourable answer, and at the close of the year a fresh embassy with Gardiner, now Bishop of Winchester, at its head was despatched to the Papal Court. But the embassy failed like its predecessors, and at the opening of 1532 Cromwell was free to take more decisive steps in the course on which he had entered.

More's
with-
drawal.

What the nature of his policy was to be had already been detected by eyes as keen as his own. More had seen in Wolsey's fall an opening for the realization of those schemes of religious and even of political reform on which the scholars of the New Learning had long been brooding. The substitution of the Lords of the Council for the autocratic rule of the Cardinal-minister, the break-up of the great mass of powers which had been gathered into a single hand, the summons of a Parliament, the ecclesiastical reforms which it at once sanctioned, were measures which promised a more legal and constitutional system of government. The question of the divorce presented to More no serious difficulty. Untenable as Henry's claim seemed to the new Chancellor, his faith in the omnipotence of Parliament would have enabled him to submit to any statute which named a new spouse as Queen and her children as heirs to the crown. But as Cromwell's policy unfolded itself he saw that more than this was impending. The Catholic instinct of his mind, the dread of a rent Christendom and of the wars and bigotry that must come of its rending, united with More's theological convictions to resist any spiritual severance of England from the Papacy. His love for freedom, his revolt against the growing autocracy of the crown, the very height and grandeur of his own spiritual convictions, all bent him to withstand a system which would concentrate in the King the whole power of Church as of State, would leave him without the one check that remained

on his despotism, and make him arbiter of the religious faith of his subjects. The later revolt of the Puritans against the King-worship which Cromwell established proved the justice of the prevision which forced More in the spring of 1532 to resign the post of Chancellor.

But the revolution from which he shrank was an inevitable one. Till now every Englishman had practically owned a double life and a double allegiance. As citizen of a temporal state his life was bounded by English shores and his loyalty due exclusively to his English King. But as citizen of the state spiritual he belonged not to England, but to Christendom. The law which governed him was not a national law but a law that embraced every European nation, and the ordinary course of judicial appeals in ecclesiastical cases proved to him that the sovereignty in all matters of conscience or religion lay not at Westminster but at Rome. Such a distinction could scarcely fail to bring embarrassment with it as the sense of national life and national pride waxed stronger; and from the reign of the Edwards the problem of reconciling the spiritual and temporal relations of the realm grew daily more difficult. Parliament had hardly risen into life when it became the organ of the national jealousy whether of any Papal jurisdiction without the realm or of the separate life and separate jurisdiction of the clergy within it. The movement was long arrested by religious reaction and civil war. But the fresh sense of national greatness which sprang from the policy of Henry the Eighth, the fresh sense of national unity as the Monarchy gathered all power into its single hand, would have itself revived the contest even without the spur of the divorce. What the question of the divorce really did was to stimulate the movement by bringing into clearer view the wreck of the great Christian commonwealth of which England had till now formed a part and the impossibility of any real exercise of a spiritual sovereignty over it by the weakened Papacy, as well as by outraging the national

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England
and
Rome.

CHAP. IV. pride through the summons of the King to a foreign bar and the submission of English interests to the will of a foreign Emperor.

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Cromwell.
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1540.

*Act of
Appeals.*

With such a spur as this the movement which More dreaded moved forward as quickly as Cromwell desired. The time had come when England was to claim for herself the fulness of power, ecclesiastical as well as temporal, within her bounds; and in the concentration of all authority within the hands of the sovereign which was the political characteristic of the time to claim this power for the nation was to claim it for the King. The import of that headship of the Church which Henry had assumed in the preceding year was brought fully out in one of the propositions laid before the Convocation of 1532. "The King's Majesty," runs this memorable clause, "hath as well the care of the souls of his subjects as their bodies; and may by the law of God by his Parliament make laws touching and concerning as well the one as the other." The principle embodied in these words was carried out in a series of decisive measures. Under strong pressure the Convocation was brought to pray that the power of independent legislation till now exercised by the Church should come to an end, and to promise "that from henceforth we shall forbear to enact, promulge, or put into execution any such constitutions and ordinances so by us to be made in time coming, unless your Highness by your royal assent shall license us to make, promulge, and execute them, and the same so made be approved by your Highness's authority." Rome was dealt with in the same unsparing fashion. The Parliament forbade by statute any further appeals to the Papal Court; and on a petition from the clergy in Convocation the Houses granted power to the King to suspend the payments of first-fruits, or the year's revenue which each bishop paid to Rome on his election to a see. All judicial, all financial connexion with the Papacy was broken by these two measures. The last indeed was as yet but a menace which Henry might

use in his negotiations with Clement. The hope which had been entertained of aid from Charles was now abandoned; and the overthrow of Norfolk and his policy of alliance with the Empire was seen at the midsummer of 1532 in the conclusion of a league with France. Cromwell had fallen back on Wolsey's system; and the divorce was now to be looked for from the united pressure of the French and English Kings on the Papal court.

But the pressure was as unsuccessful as before. In November Clement threatened the King with excommunication if he did not restore Catharine to her place as Queen and abstain from all intercourse with Anne Boleyn till the case was tried. But Henry still refused to submit to the judgement of any court outside his realm; and the Pope, ready as he was with evasion and delay, dared not alienate Charles by consenting to a trial within it. The lavish pledges which Francis had given in an interview during the preceding summer may have aided to spur the King to a decisive step which closed the long debate. At the opening of 1533 Henry was privately married to Anne Boleyn. The match however was carefully kept secret while the Papal sanction was being gained for the appointment of Cranmer to the see of Canterbury which had become vacant by Archbishop Warham's death in the preceding year. But Cranmer's consecration at the close of March was the signal for more open action, and Cromwell's policy was at last brought fairly into play. The new primate at once laid the question of the King's marriage before the two Houses of Convocation, and both voted that the licence of Pope Julius had been beyond the Papal powers and that the marriage which it authorized was void. In May the King's suit was brought before the Archbishop in his court at Dunstable; his judgement annulled the marriage with Catharine as void from the beginning, and pronounced the marriage with Anne Boleyn, which her pregnancy had forced Henry to reveal, a lawful marriage. A week later the hand of Cranmer

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*Marriage
of Anne
Boleyn.*

CHAP. IV. placed upon Anne's brow the crown which she had coveted so long.

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Cromwell.

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Act of
Supre-
macy.

"There was much murmuring" at measures such as these. Many thought "that the Bishop of Rome would curse all Englishmen, and that the Emperor and he would destroy all the people." Fears of the overthrow of religion told on the clergy; the merchants dreaded an interruption of the trade with Flanders, Italy, and Spain. But Charles, though still loyal to his aunt's cause, had no mind to incur risks for her; and Clement, though he annulled Cranmer's proceedings, hesitated as yet to take sterner action. Henry on the other hand, conscious that the die was thrown, moved rapidly forward in the path that Cromwell had opened. The Pope's reversal of the Primate's judgement was answered by an appeal to a General Council. The decision of the cardinals to whom the case was referred in the spring of 1534, a decision which asserted the lawfulness of Catharine's marriage, was met by the enforcement of the long suspended statute forbidding the payment of first-fruits to the Pope. Though the King was still firm in his resistance to Lutheran opinions and at this moment endeavoured to prevent by statute the importation of Lutheran books, the less scrupulous hand of his minister was seen already striving to find a counterpoise to the hostility of the Emperor in an alliance with the Lutheran princes of North Germany. Cromwell was now fast rising to a power which rivalled Wolsey's. His elevation to the post of Lord Privy Seal placed him on a level with the great nobles of the Council board; and Norfolk, constant in his hopes of reconciliation with Charles and the Papacy, saw his plans set aside for the wider and more daring projects of "the blacksmith's son." Cromwell still clung to the political engine whose powers he had turned to the service of the Crown. The Parliament which had been summoned at Wolsey's fall met steadily year after year; and measure after measure had shown its accordance with the royal will in the strife with Rome. It was now

called to deal a final blow. Step by step the ground had been cleared for the great Statute by which the new character of the English Church was defined in the session of 1534. By the Act of Supremacy authority in all matters ecclesiastical was vested solely in the Crown. The courts spiritual became as thoroughly the King's courts as the temporal courts at Westminster. The Statute ordered that the King "shall be taken, accepted, and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, and shall have and enjoy annexed and united to the Imperial Crown of this realm as well the title and state thereof as all the honours, jurisdictions, authorities, immunities, profits, and commodities to the said dignity belonging, with full power to visit, repress, redress, reform, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities, which by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction might or may lawfully be reformed."

The full import of the Act of Supremacy was only seen in the following year. At the opening of 1535 Henry formally took the title of "on earth Supreme Head of the Church of England," and some months later Cromwell was raised to the post of Vicar-General or Vicegerent of the King in all matters ecclesiastical. His title, like his office, recalled the system of Wolsey. It was not only as Legate but in later years as Vicar-general of the Pope that Wolsey had brought all spiritual causes in England to an English court. The supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the realm passed into the hands of a minister who as Chancellor already exercised its supreme civil jurisdiction. The Papal power had therefore long seemed transferred to the Crown before the legislative measures which followed the divorce actually transferred it. It was in fact the system of Catholicism itself that trained men to look without surprize on the concentration of all spiritual and secular authority in Cromwell. Successor to Wolsey as Keeper of the Great Seal, it seemed natural enough that

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The
Vicar-
General.

CHAP. IV. Cromwell should succeed him also as Vicar-General of the Church and that the union of the two powers should be restored in the hands of a minister of the King. But the mere fact that these powers were united in the hands not of a priest but of a layman showed the new drift of the royal policy. The Church was no longer to be brought indirectly under the royal power; in the policy of Cromwell it was to be openly laid prostrate at the foot of the throne.

Subjection of the Bishops. And this policy his position enabled him to carry out with a terrible thoroughness. One great step towards its realization had already been taken in the statute which annihilated the free legislative powers of the convocations of the Clergy. Another followed in an act which under the pretext of restoring the free election of bishops turned every prelate into a nominee of the King. The election of bishops by the chapters of their cathedral churches had long become formal, and their appointment had since the time of the Edwards been practically made by the Papacy on the nomination of the Crown. The privilege of free election was now with bitter irony restored to the chapters, but they were compelled on pain of præmunire to choose whatever candidate was recommended by the King. This strange expedient has lasted till the present time, though its character has wholly changed with the developement of constitutional rule. The nomination of bishops has ever since the accession of the Georges passed from the King in person to the Minister who represents the will of the people. Practically therefore an English prelate, alone among all the prelates of the world, is now raised to his episcopal throne by the same popular election which raised Ambrose to his episcopal chair at Milan. But at the moment of the change Cromwell's measure reduced the English bishops to absolute dependence on the Crown. Their dependence would have been complete had his policy been thoroughly carried out and the royal power of deposition put in force as well as that of appointment. As it was

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Henry could warn the Archbishop of Dublin that if he persevered in his "proud folly, we be able to remove you again and to put another man of more virtue and honesty in your place." By the more ardent partizans of the Reformation this dependence of the bishops on the Crown was fully recognized. On the death of Henry the Eighth Cranmer took out a new commission from Edward for the exercise of his office. Latimer, when the royal policy clashed with his belief, felt bound to resign the See of Worcester. If the power of deposition was quietly abandoned by Elizabeth, the abandonment was due not so much to any deference for the religious instincts of the nation as to the fact that the steady servility of the bishops rendered its exercise unnecessary.

A second step in Cromwell's policy followed hard on this enslavement of the episcopate. Master of Convocation, absolute master of the bishops, Henry had become master of the monastic orders through the right of visitation over them which had been transferred by the Act of Supremacy from the Papacy to the Crown. The monks were soon to know what this right of visitation implied in the hands of the Vicar-General. As an outlet for religious enthusiasm monasticism was practically dead. The friar, now that his fervour of devotion and his intellectual energy had passed away, had sunk into a mere beggar. The monks had become mere landowners. Most of the religious houses were anxious only to enlarge their revenues and to diminish the number of those who shared them. In the general carelessness which prevailed as to the spiritual objects of their trust, in the wasteful management of their estates, in the indolence and self-indulgence which for the most part characterized them, the monastic establishments simply exhibited the faults of all corporate bodies that have outlived the work which they were created to perform. They were no more unpopular however than such corporate bodies generally are. The Lollard cry for their

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*The
Religious
Houses.*

CHAP. IV. suppression had died away. In the north, where some of the greatest abbeys were situated, the monks were on good terms with the country gentry and their houses served as schools for their children; nor is there any sign of a different feeling elsewhere.

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Suppression of the Lesser Monasteries.

But they had drawn on themselves at once the hatred of the New Learning and of the Monarchy. In the early days of the revival of letters Popes and bishops had joined with princes and scholars in welcoming the diffusion of culture and the hopes of religious reform. But though an abbot or a prior here or there might be found among the supporters of the movement, the monastic orders as a whole repelled it with unswerving obstinacy. The quarrel only became more bitter as years went on. The keen sarcasms of Erasmus, the insolent buffoonery of Hutten, were lavished on the "lovers of darkness" and of the cloister. In England Colet and More echoed with greater reserve the scorn and invective of their friends. The Monarchy had other causes for its hate. In Cromwell's system there was no room for either the virtues or the vices of monasticism, for its indolence and superstition, or for its independence of the throne. The bold stand which the monastic orders had made against benevolences had never been forgiven, while the revenues of their foundations offered spoil vast enough to fill the royal treasury and secure a host of friends for the new reforms. Two royal commissioners therefore were despatched on a general visitation of the religious houses, and their reports formed a "Black Book" which was laid before Parliament in 1536. It was acknowledged that about a third of the houses, including the bulk of the larger abbeys, were fairly and decently conducted. The rest were charged with drunkenness, with simony, and with the foulest and most revolting crimes. The character of the visitors, the sweeping nature of their report, and the long debate which followed on its reception, leaves little doubt that these charges were grossly exaggerated. But the want

of any effective discipline which had resulted from their exemption from all but Papal supervision told fatally against monastic morality even in abbeys like St. Alban's; and the acknowledgement of Warham, as well as a partial measure of suppression begun by Wolsey, go some way to prove that in the smaller houses at least indolence had passed into crime. A cry of "Down with them" broke from the Commons as the report was read. The country however was still far from desiring the utter downfall of the monastic system, and a long and bitter debate was followed by a compromise which suppressed all houses whose income fell below £200 a year. Of the thousand religious houses which then existed in England nearly four hundred were dissolved under this Act and their revenues granted to the Crown.

The secular clergy alone remained; and injunction after injunction from the Vicar-General taught rector and vicar that they must learn to regard themselves as mere mouth-pieces of the royal will. The Church was gagged. With the instinct of genius Cromwell discerned the part which the pulpit, as the one means which then existed of speaking to the people at large, was to play in the religious and political struggle that was at hand; and he resolved to turn it to the profit of the Monarchy. The restriction of the right of preaching to priests who received licenses from the Crown silenced every voice of opposition. Even to those who received these licenses theological controversy was forbidden; and a high-handed process of "tuning the pulpits" by express directions as to the subject and tenor of each special discourse made the preachers at every crisis mere means of diffusing the royal will. As a first step in this process every bishop, abbot, and parish priest, was required by the new Vicar-General to preach against the usurpation of the Papacy and to proclaim the king as supreme Head of the Church on earth. The very topics of the sermon were carefully prescribed; the bishops were held responsible for the

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Enslavement of the Clergy.

CHAP. IV. compliance of the clergy with these orders; and the sheriffs were held responsible for the obedience of the bishops.

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The Terror.

While the great revolution which struck down the Church was in progress England looked silently on. In all the earlier ecclesiastical changes, in the contest over the Papal jurisdiction and Papal exactions, in the reform of the Church courts, even in the curtailment of the legislative independence of the clergy, the nation as a whole had gone with the King. But from the enslavement of the priesthood, from the gagging of the pulpits, from the suppression of the monasteries, the bulk of the nation stood aloof. There were few voices indeed of protest. As the royal policy disclosed itself, as the Monarchy trampled under foot the tradition and reverence of ages gone by, as its figure rose bare and terrible out of the wreck of old institutions, England simply held her breath. It is only through the stray depositions of royal spies that we catch a glimpse of the wrath and hate which lay seething under this silence of the people. For the silence was a silence of terror. Before Cromwell's rise and after his fall from power the reign of Henry the Eighth witnessed no more than the common tyranny and bloodshed of the time. But the years of Cromwell's administration form the one period in our history which deserves the name that men have given to the rule of Robespierre. It was the English Terror. It was by terror that Cromwell mastered the King. Cranmer could plead for him at a later time with Henry as "one whose surety was only by your Majesty, who loved your Majesty, as I ever thought, no less than God." But the attitude of Cromwell towards the King was something more than that of absolute dependence and unquestioning devotion. He was "so vigilant to preserve your Majesty from all treasons," adds the Primate, "that few could be so secretly conceived but he detected the same from the beginning." Henry, like every Tudor, was fearless of open danger, but

tremulously sensitive to the lightest breath of hidden disloyalty; and it was on this dread that Cromwell based the fabric of his power. He was hardly secretary before spies were scattered broadcast over the land. Secret denunciations poured into the open ear of the minister. The air was thick with tales of plots and conspiracies, and with the detection and suppression of each Cromwell tightened his hold on the King.

As it was by terror that he mastered the King, so it was by terror that he mastered the people. Men felt in England, to use the figure by which Erasmus paints the time, "as if a scorpion lay sleeping under every stone." The confessional had no secrets for Cromwell. Men's talk with their closest friends found its way to his ear. "Words idly spoken," the murmurs of a petulant abbot, the ravings of a moon-struck nun, were, as the nobles cried passionately at his fall, "tortured into treason." The only chance of safety lay in silence. "Friends who used to write and send me presents," Erasmus tells us, "now send neither letter nor gifts, nor receive any from any one, and this through fear." But even the refuge of silence was closed by a law more infamous than any that has ever blotted the Statute-book of England. Not only was thought made treason, but men were forced to reveal their thoughts on pain of their very silence being punished with the penalties of treason. All trust in the older bulwarks of liberty was destroyed by a policy as daring as it was unscrupulous. The noblest institutions were degraded into instruments of terror. Though Wolsey had strained the law to the utmost he had made no open attack on the freedom of justice. If he shrank from assembling Parliaments it was from his sense that they were the bulwarks of liberty. But under Cromwell the coercion of juries and the management of judges rendered the courts mere mouthpieces of the royal will: and where even this shadow of justice proved an obstacle to bloodshed, Parliament was brought into play to pass bill after

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bill of attainder. "He shall be judged by the bloody laws he has himself made," was the cry of the Council at the moment of his fall, and by a singular retribution the crowning injustice which he sought to introduce even into the practice of attainder, the condemnation of a man without hearing his defence, was only practised on himself.

But ruthless as was the Terror of Cromwell it was of a nobler type than the Terror of France. He never struck uselessly or capriciously, or stooped to the meaner victims of the guillotine. His blows were effective just because he chose his victims from among the noblest and the best. If he struck at the Church, it was through the Carthusians, the holiest and the most renowned of English Churchmen. If he struck at the baronage, it was through Lady Salisbury, in whose veins flowed the blood of kings. If he struck at the New Learning, it was through the murder of Sir Thomas More. But no personal vindictiveness mingled with his crime. In temper indeed, so far as we can judge from the few stories which lingered among his friends, he was a generous, kindly-hearted man, with pleasant and winning manners which atoned for a certain awkwardness of person, and with a constancy of friendship which won him a host of devoted adherents. But no touch either of love or hate swayed him from his course. The student of Machiavelli had not studied the "Prince" in vain. He had reduced bloodshed to a system. Fragments of his papers still show us with what a business-like brevity he ticked off human lives among the casual "remembrances" of the day. "Item, the Abbot of Reading to be sent down to be tried and executed at Reading." "Item, to know the King's pleasure touching Master More." "Item, when Master Fisher shall go to his execution, and the other." It is indeed this utter absence of all passion, of all personal feeling, that makes the figure of Cromwell the most terrible in our history. He has an absolute faith in the end he is pursuing, and he simply hews his way to it as a woodman hews his way through the forest, axe in hand.

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The choice of his first victim showed the ruthless precision with which Cromwell was to strike. In the general opinion of Europe the foremost Englishman of the time was Sir Thomas More. As the policy of the divorce ended in an open rupture with Rome he had withdrawn silently from the ministry, but his silent disapproval of the new policy was more telling than the opposition of obscurer foes. To Cromwell there must have been something specially galling in More's attitude of reserve. The religious reforms of the New Learning were being rapidly carried out, but it was plain that the man who represented the very life of the New Learning believed that the sacrifice of liberty and justice was too dear a price to pay even for religious reform. In the actual changes which the divorce brought about there was nothing to move More to active or open opposition. Though he looked on the divorce and re-marriage as without religious warrant, he found no difficulty in accepting an Act of Succession passed in 1534 which declared the marriage of Anne Boleyn valid, annulled the title of Catharine's child, Mary, and declared the children of Anne the only lawful heirs to the crown. His faith in the power of Parliament over all civil matters was too complete to admit a doubt of its competence to regulate the succession to the throne. But by the same Act an oath recognizing the succession as then arranged was ordered to be taken by all persons; and this oath contained an acknowledgement that the marriage with Catharine was against Scripture and invalid from the beginning. Henry had long known More's belief on this point; and the summons to take this oath was simply a summons to death. More was at his house at Chelsea when the summons called him to Lambeth, to the house where he had bandied fun with Warham and Erasmus or bent over the easel of Holbein. For a moment there may have been some passing impulse to yield. But it was soon over. Triumphant in all else, the monarchy was to find its power stop short at the conscience of man. The great

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More
sent to the
Tower.

battle of spiritual freedom, the battle of the Protestant against Mary, of the Catholic against Elizabeth, of the Puritan against Charles, of the Independent against the Presbyterian, began at the moment when More refused to bend or to deny his convictions at a king's bidding.

"I thank the Lord," More said with a sudden start as the boat dropped silently down the river from his garden steps in the early morning, "I thank the Lord that the field is won." At Lambeth Cranmer and his fellow commissioners tendered to him the new oath of allegiance; but, as they expected, it was refused. They bade him walk in the garden that he might reconsider his reply. The day was hot and More seated himself in a window from which he could look down into the crowded court. Even in the presence of death the quick sympathy of his nature could enjoy the humour and life of the throng below. "I saw," he said afterwards, "Master Latimer very merry in the court, for he laughed and took one or twain by the neck so handsomely that if they had been women I should have weened that he waxed wanton." The crowd below was chiefly of priests, rectors, and vicars, pressing to take the oath that More found harder than death. He bore them no grudge for it. When he heard the voice of one who was known to have boggled hard at the oath a little while before calling loudly and ostentatiously for drink, he only noted him with his peculiar humour. "He drank," More supposed, "either from dryness or from gladness" or "to show quod ille notus erat Pontifici." He was called in again at last, but only repeated his refusal. It was in vain that Cranmer plied him with distinctions which perplexed even the subtle wit of the ex-chancellor; More remained unshaken and passed to the Tower. He was followed there by Bishop Fisher of Rochester, the most aged and venerable of the English prelates, who was charged with countenancing treason by listening to the prophecies of a religious fanatic called "The Nun of Kent." But for the moment even Cromwell

shrank from their blood. They remained prisoners while a new and more terrible engine was devised to crush out the silent but widespread opposition to the religious changes.

By a statute passed at the close of 1534 a new treason was created in the denial of the King's titles; and in the opening of 1535 Henry assumed as we have seen the title of "on earth supreme head of the Church of England." The measure was at once followed up by a blow at victims hardly less venerable than More. In the general relaxation of the religious life the charity and devotion of the brethren of the Charter-house had won the reverence even of those who condemned monasticism. After a stubborn resistance they had acknowledged the royal Supremacy and taken the oath of submission prescribed by the Act. But by an infamous construction of the statute which made the denial of the Supremacy treason, the refusal of satisfactory answers to official questions as to a conscientious belief in it was held to be equivalent to open denial. The aim of the new measure was well known, and the brethren prepared to die. In the agony of waiting enthusiasm brought its imaginative consolations; "when the Host was lifted up there came as it were a whisper of air which breathed upon our faces as we knelt; and there came a sweet soft sound of music." They had not long however to wait, for their refusal to answer was the signal for their doom. Three of the brethren went to the gallows; the rest were flung into Newgate, chained to posts in a noisome dungeon where, "tied and not able to stir," they were left to perish of gaol-fever and starvation. In a fortnight five were dead and the rest at the point of death, "almost despatched," Cromwell's envoy wrote to him, "by the hand of God, of which, considering their behaviour, I am not sorry." Their death was soon followed by that of More. The interval of imprisonment had failed to break his resolution, and the new statute sufficed to bring him to the block. With Fisher he was convicted of denying the king's title as only

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Death of
More.

CHAP. IV. supreme head of the Church. The old Bishop approached the scaffold with a book of the New Testament in his hand. He opened it at a venture ere he knelt, and read, "This is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God." In July More followed his fellow-prisoner to the block. Just before the fatal blow he moved his beard carefully from the reach of the doomsman's axe. "Pity that should be cut," he was heard to mutter with a touch of the old sad irony, "that has never committed treason."

Cromwell and the Nobles. Cromwell had at last reached his aim. England lay panic-stricken at the feet of the "low-born knave," as the nobles called him, who represented the omnipotence of the crown. Like Wolsey he concentrated in his hands the whole administration of the state; he was at once foreign minister and home minister, and vicar-general of the Church, the creator of a new fleet, the organizer of armies, the president of the terrible Star Chamber. His Italian indifference to the mere show of power stood out in strong contrast with the pomp of the Cardinal. Cromwell's personal habits were simple and unostentatious; if he clutched at money, it was to feed the army of spies whom he maintained at his own expense, and whose work he surveyed with a ceaseless vigilance. For his activity was boundless. More than fifty volumes remain of the gigantic mass of his correspondence. Thousands of letters from "poor bedesmen," from outraged wives and wronged labourers and persecuted heretics flowed in to the all-powerful minister whose system of personal government turned him into the universal court of appeal. But powerful as he was, and mighty as was the work which he had accomplished, he knew that harder blows had to be struck before his position was secure. The new changes, above all the irritation which had been caused by the outrages with which the dissolution of the monasteries was accompanied, gave point to the mutinous temper that prevailed throughout the country; for the revolution in agriculture was still going on, and evictions furnished em-

bittered outcasts to swell the ranks of any rising. Nor did it seem as though revolt, if it once broke out, would want leaders to head it. The nobles who had writhed under the rule of the Cardinal, writhed yet more bitterly under the rule of one whom they looked upon not only as Wolsey's tool, but as a low-born upstart. "The world will never mend," Lord Hussey had been heard to say, "till we fight for it." "Knave rule about the king!" cried Lord Exeter, "I trust some day to give them a buffet." At this moment too the hopes of political reaction were stirred by the fate of one whom the friends of the old order looked upon as the source of all their troubles. In the spring of 1536, while the dissolution of the monasteries was marking the triumph of the new policy, Anne Boleyn was suddenly charged with adultery, and sent to the Tower. A few days later she was tried, condemned, and brought to the block. The Queen's ruin was everywhere taken as an omen of ruin to the cause which had become identified with her own, and the old nobility mustered courage to face the minister who held them at his feet.

They found their opportunity in the discontent of the north, where the monasteries had been popular, and where the rougher mood of the people turned easily to resistance. In the autumn of 1536 a rising broke out in Lincolnshire, and this was hardly quelled when all Yorkshire rose in arms. From every parish the farmers marched with the parish priest at their head upon York, and the surrender of this city determined the waverers. In a few days Skipton Castle, where the Earl of Cumberland held out with a handful of men, was the only spot north of the Humber which remained true to the King. Durham rose at the call of the chiefs of the house of Neville, Lords Westmoreland and Latimer. Though the Earl of Northumberland feigned sickness, the Percies joined the revolt. Lord Darcy, the chief of the Yorkshire nobles, surrendered Pomfret, and was acknowledged as their chief by the insurgents. The whole nobility

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*Pilgrimage
of Grace.*

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of the north were now enlisted in the "Pilgrimage of Grace," as the rising called itself, and thirty thousand "tall men and well horsed" moved on the Don demanding the reversal of the royal policy, a reunion with Rome, the restoration of Catharine's daughter, Mary, to her rights as heiress of the Crown, redress for the wrongs done to the Church, and above all the driving away of base-born councillors, or in other words, the fall of Cromwell. Though their advance was checked by negotiation, the organization of the revolt went steadily on throughout the winter, and a Parliament of the North which gathered at Pomfret formally adopted the demands of the insurgents. Only six thousand men under Norfolk barred their way southward, and the Midland counties were known to be disaffected.

*Its Sup-
pression.*

But Cromwell remained undaunted by the peril. He suffered indeed Norfolk to negotiate; and allowed Henry under pressure from his Council to promise pardon and a free Parliament at York, a pledge which Norfolk and Dacre alike construed into an acceptance of the demands made by the insurgents. Their leaders at once flung aside the badge of the Five Wounds which they had worn with a cry, "We will wear no badge but that of our Lord the King," and nobles and farmers dispersed to their homes in triumph. But the towns of the North were no sooner garrisoned and Norfolk's army in the heart of Yorkshire than the veil was flung aside. A few isolated outbreaks in the spring of 1537 gave a pretext for the withdrawal of every concession. The arrest of the leaders of the "Pilgrimage of Grace" was followed by ruthless severities. The country was covered with gibbets. Whole districts were given up to military execution. But it was on the leaders of the rising that Cromwell's hand fell heaviest. He seized his opportunity for dealing at the northern nobles a fatal blow. "Cromwell," one of the chief among them broke fiercely out as he stood at the Council board, "it is thou that art the very special and chief cause of all this rebellion and wickedness, and dost daily travail

to bring us to our ends and strike off our heads. I trust that ere thou die, though thou wouldst procure all the noblest heads within the realm to be stricken off, yet there shall one head remain that shall strike off thy head." But the warning was unheeded. Lord Darcy, who stood first among the nobles of Yorkshire, and Lord Hussey, who stood first among the nobles of Lincolnshire, went alike to the block. The Abbot of Barlings, who had ridden into Lincoln with his canons in full armour, swung with his brother Abbots of Whalley, Woburn, and Sawley from the gallows. The Abbots of Fountains and of Jervaulx were hanged at Tyburn side by side with the representative of the great line of Percy. Lady Bulmer was burned at the stake. Sir Robert Constable was hanged in chains before the gate of Hull.

The defeat of the northern revolt showed the immense force which the monarchy had gained. Even among the rebels themselves not a voice had threatened Henry's throne. It was not at the King that they aimed these blows, but at the "low-born knaves" who stood about the King. At this moment too Henry's position was strengthened by the birth of an heir. On the death of Anne Boleyn he had married Jane Seymour, the daughter of a Wiltshire knight; and in 1537 this Queen died in giving birth to a boy, the future Edward the Sixth. The triumph of the Crown at home was doubled by its triumph in the great dependency which had so long held the English authority at bay, across St. George's Channel. Though Henry the Seventh had begun the work of bridling Ireland he had no strength for exacting a real submission; and the great Norman lords of the Pale, the Butlers and Geraldines, the De la Poers and the Fitzpatricks, though subjects in name, remained in fact defiant of the royal authority. In manners and outer seeming they had sunk into mere natives; their feuds were as incessant as those of the Irish sept; and their despotism combined the horrors of feudal oppression with those of Celtic anarchy.

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Ireland.

CHAP. IV. Crushed by taxation, by oppression, by misgovernment, plundered alike by native marauders and by the troops levied to disperse them, the wretched descendants of the first English settlers preferred even Irish misrule to English "order," and the border of the Pale retreated steadily towards Dublin. The towns of the seaboard, sheltered by their walls and their municipal self-government, formed the only exceptions to the general chaos; elsewhere throughout its dominions the English Government, though still strong enough to break down any open revolt, was a mere phantom of rule. From the Celtic tribes without the Pale even the remnant of civilization and of native union which had lingered on to the time of Strongbow had vanished away. The feuds of the Irish septs were as bitter as their hatred of the stranger; and the Government at Dublin found it easy to maintain a strife which saved it the necessity of self-defence among a people whose "nature is such that for money one shall have the son to war against the father, and the father against his child." During the first thirty years of the sixteenth century the annals of the country which remained under native rule record more than a hundred raids and battles between clans of the north alone.

Ireland and Cromwell. But the time came at last for a vigorous attempt on the part of England to introduce order into this chaos of turbulence and misrule. To Henry the Eighth the policy of forbearance, of ruling Ireland through the great Irish lords, was utterly hateful. His purpose was to rule in Ireland as thoroughly and effectively as he ruled in England, and during the latter half of his reign he bent his whole energies to accomplish this aim. From the first hour of his accession indeed the Irish lords felt the heavier hand of a master. The Geraldines, who had been suffered under the preceding reign to govern Ireland in the name of the Crown, were quick to discover that the Crown would no longer stoop to be their tool. Their head, the Earl of Kildare, was called to England and thrown into

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the Tower. The great house resolved to frighten England again into a conviction of its helplessness; and a rising of Lord Thomas Fitzgerald in 1534 followed the usual fashion of Irish revolts. A murder of the Archbishop of Dublin, a capture of the city, a repulse before its castle, a harrying of the Pale, ended in a sudden disappearance of the rebels among the bogs and forests of the border on the advance of the English forces. It had been usual to meet such an onset as this by a raid of the same character, by a corresponding failure before the castle of the rebellious noble, and a retreat like his own which served as a preliminary to negotiations and a compromise. Unluckily for the Fitzgeralds Henry resolved to take Ireland seriously in hand, and he had Cromwell to execute his will. Skeffington, a new Lord Deputy who was sent over in 1535, brought with him a train of artillery which worked a startling change in the political aspect of the island. The castles that had hitherto sheltered rebellion were battered into ruins. Maynooth, a stronghold from which the Geraldines threatened Dublin and ruled the Pale at their will, was beaten down in a fortnight. So crushing and unforeseen was the blow that resistance was at once at an end. Not only was the power of the great Norman house which had towered over Ireland utterly broken, but only a single boy was left to preserve its name.

With the fall of the Fitzgeralds Ireland felt itself in a master's grasp. "Irishmen," wrote one of the Lord Justices to Cromwell, "were never in such fear as now. The King's sessions are being kept in five shires more than formerly." Not only were the Englishmen of the Pale at Henry's feet but the kerns of Wicklow and Wexford sent in their submission; and for the first time in men's memory an English army appeared in Munster and reduced the south to obedience. The border of the Pale was crossed, and the wide territory where the Celtic tribes had preserved their independence since the days of the Angevins was trampled into subjection. A castle of the

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CHAP. IV. O'Briens which guarded the passage of the Shannon—was taken by assault, and its fall carried with it the submission of Clare. The capture of Athlone brought about the reduction of Connaught, and assured the loyalty of the great Norman house of the De Burghs or Bourkes who had assumed an almost royal authority in the west. The resistance of the tribes of the north was broken in a victory at Bellahoe. In seven years, partly through the vigour of Skeffington's successor, Lord Leonard Grey, and still more through the resolute will of Henry and Cromwell, the power of the Crown, which had been limited to the walls of Dublin, was acknowledged over the length and breadth of the land.

*Henry's
Irish
Govern-
ment.*

But submission was far from being all that Henry desired. His aim was to civilize the people whom he had conquered—to rule not by force but by law. But the only conception of law which the King or his ministers could frame was that of English law. The customary law which prevailed without the Pale, the native system of clan government and common tenure of land by the tribe, as well as the poetry and literature which threw their lustre over the Irish tongue, were either unknown to the English statesmen or despised by them as barbarous. The one mode of civilizing Ireland and redressing its chaotic misrule which presented itself to their minds was that of destroying the whole Celtic tradition of the Irish people—that of “making Ireland English” in manners, in law, and in tongue. The Deputy, Parliament, Judges, Sheriffs, which already existed within the Pale, furnished a faint copy of English institutions; and it was hoped that these might be gradually extended over the whole island. The English language and mode of life would follow, it was believed, the English law. The one effectual way of bringing about such a change as this lay in a complete conquest of the island, and in its colonization by English settlers; but from this course, pressed on him as it was by his own lieutenants and by the settlers of the Pale, even the

iron will of Cromwell shrank. It was at once too bloody and too expensive. To win over the chiefs, to turn them by policy and a patient generosity into English nobles, to use the traditional devotion of their tribal dependence as a means of diffusing the new civilization of their chiefs, to trust to time and steady government for the gradual reformation of the country, was a policy safer, cheaper, more humane, and more statesmanlike.

It was this system which, even before the fall of the Geraldines, Henry had resolved to adopt; and it was this that he pressed on Ireland when the conquest laid it at his feet. The chiefs were to be persuaded of the advantages of justice and legal rule. Their fear of any purpose to “expel them from their lands and dominions lawfully possessed” was to be dispelled by a promise “to conserve them as their own.” Even their remonstrances against the introduction of English law were to be regarded, and the course of justice to be enforced or mitigated according to the circumstances of the country. In the resumption of lands or rights which clearly belonged to the Crown “sober ways, politic shifts, and amiable persuasions” were to be preferred to rigorous dealing. It was this system of conciliation which was in the main carried out by the English Government under Henry and his two successors. Chieftain after chieftain was won over to the acceptance of the indenture which guaranteed him in the possession of his lands and left his authority over his tribesmen untouched on condition of a pledge of loyalty, of abstinence from illegal wars and exactions on his fellow-subjects, and of rendering a fixed tribute and service in war-time to the Crown. The sole test of loyalty demanded was the acceptance of an English title and the education of a son at the English court; though in some cases, like that of the O'Neills, a promise was exacted to use the English language and dress, and to encourage tillage and husbandry. Compliance with conditions such as these was procured not merely by the terror of the royal name but

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by heavy bribes. The chieftains in fact profited greatly by the change. Not only were the lands of the suppressed abbeys granted to them on their assumption of their new titles, but the English law-courts, ignoring the Irish custom by which the land belonged to the tribe at large, regarded the chiefs as the sole proprietors of the soil. The merits of the system were unquestionable; its faults were such as a statesman of that day could hardly be expected to perceive. The Tudor politicians held that the one hope for the regeneration of Ireland lay in its absorbing the civilization of England. The prohibition of the national dress, customs, laws, and language must have seemed to them merely the suppression of a barbarism which stood in the way of all improvement.

*Cromwell's
Reform of
Religion.*

With England and Ireland alike at his feet Cromwell could venture on a last and crowning change. He could claim for the monarchy the right of dictating at its pleasure the form of faith and doctrine to be taught throughout the land. Henry had remained true to the standpoint of the New Learning; and the sympathies of Cromwell were mainly with those of his master. They had no wish for any violent break with the ecclesiastical forms of the past. They desired religious reform rather than religious revolution, a simplification of doctrine rather than any radical change in it, the purification of worship rather than the introduction of any wholly new ritual. Their theology remained, as they believed, a Catholic theology, but a theology cleared of the superstitious growths which obscured the true Catholicism of the early Church. In a word their dream was the dream of Erasmus and Colet. The spirit of Erasmus was seen in the Articles of religion which were laid before Convocation in 1536, in the acknowledgement of Justification by Faith, a doctrine for which the founders of the New Learning, such as Contarini and Pole, were struggling at Rome itself, in the condemnation of purgatory, of pardons, and of masses for the dead, as it was seen in the admission of prayers for the dead and

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in the retention of the ceremonies of the church without material change. A series of royal injunctions which followed carried out the same policy of reform. Pilgrimages were suppressed; the excessive number of holy days was curtailed; the worship of images and relics was discouraged in words which seem almost copied from the protest of Erasmus. His appeal for a translation of the Bible which weavers might repeat at their shuttle and ploughmen sing at their plough received at last a reply. At the outset of the ministry of Norfolk and More the King had promised an English version of the scriptures, while prohibiting the circulation of Tyndale's Lutheran translation. The work however lagged in the hands of the bishops; and as a preliminary measure the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were now rendered into English, and ordered to be taught by every schoolmaster and father of a family to his children and pupils. But the bishops' version still hung on hand; till in despair of its appearance a friend of Archbishop Cranmer, Miles Coverdale, was employed to correct and revise the translation of Tyndale; and the Bible which he edited was published in 1538 under the avowed patronage of Henry himself.

But the force of events was already carrying England far from the standpoint of Erasmus or More. The dream of the New Learning was to be wrought out through the progress of education and piety. In the policy of Cromwell reform was to be brought about by the brute force of the Monarchy. The story of the royal supremacy was graven even on the titlepage of the new Bible. It is Henry on his throne who gives the sacred volume to Cranmer, ere Cranmer and Cromwell can distribute it to the throng of priests and laymen below. Hitherto men had looked on religious truth as a gift from the Church. They were now to look on it as a gift from the King. The very gratitude of Englishmen for fresh spiritual enlightenment was to tell to the profit of the royal power. No conception could be further from that of the New

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Learning, from the plea for intellectual freedom which runs through the life of Erasmus or the craving for political liberty which gives nobleness to the speculations of More. Nor was it possible for Henry himself to avoid drifting from the standpoint he had chosen. He had written against Luther; he had persisted in opposing Lutheran doctrine; he had passed new laws to hinder the circulation of Lutheran books in his realm. But influences from without as from within drove him nearer to Lutheranism. If the encouragement of Francis had done somewhat to bring about his final breach with the Papacy, he soon found little will in the French King to follow him in any course of separation from Rome; and the French alliance threatened to become useless as a shelter against the wrath of the Emperor. Charles was goaded into action by the bill annulling Mary's right of succession; and in 1535 he proposed to unite his house with that of Francis by close intermarriage and to sanction Mary's marriage with a son of the French King, if Francis would join in an attack on England. Whether such a proposal was serious or no, Henry had to dread attack from Charles himself and to look for new allies against it. He was driven to offer his alliance to the Lutheran princes of North Germany, who dreaded like himself the power of the Emperor, and who were now gathering in the League of Schmalkald.

*The
Articles
of 1536.*

But the German Princes made agreement as to doctrine a condition of their alliance; and their pressure was backed by Henry's partizans among the clergy at home. In Cromwell's scheme for mastering the priesthood it had been needful to place men on whom the King could rely at their head. Cranmer became Primate, Latimer became Bishop of Worcester, Shaxton and Barlow were raised to the sees of Salisbury and St. David's, Hilsey to that of Rochester, Goodrich to that of Ely, Fox to that of Hereford. But it was hard to find men among the clergy who paused at Henry's theological resting-place; and of these prelates all except Latimer were known to sympathize with Luther-

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anism, though Cranmer lagged far behind his fellows in their zeal for reform. The influence of these men as well as of an attempt to comply at least partly with the demand of the German Princes left its stamp on the Articles of 1536. For the principle of Catholicism, of a universal form of faith overspreading all temporal dominions, the Lutheran states had substituted the principle of territorial religion, of the right of each sovereign or people to determine the form of belief which should be held within their bounds. The severance from Rome had already brought Henry to this principle; and the Act of Supremacy was its emphatic assertion. In England too, as in North Germany, the repudiation of the Papal authority as a ground of faith, of the voice of the Pope as a declaration of truth, had driven men to find such a ground and declaration in the Bible; and the Articles expressly based the faith of the Church of England on the Bible and the three Creeds. With such fundamental principles of agreement it was possible to borrow from the Augsburg Confession five of the ten articles which Henry laid before the Convocation. If penance was still retained as a sacrament, baptism and the Lord's Supper were alone maintained to be sacraments with it; the doctrine of Transubstantiation which Henry stubbornly maintained differed so little from the doctrine maintained by Luther that the words of Lutheran formularies were borrowed to explain it; Confession was admitted by the Lutheran Churches as well as by the English. The veneration of saints and the doctrine of prayer to them, though still retained, was so modified as to present little difficulty even to a Lutheran.

However disguised in form, the doctrinal advance made in the Articles of 1536 was an immense one; and a vehement opposition might have been looked for from those of the bishops like Gardiner, who while they agreed with Henry's policy of establishing a national Church remained opposed to any change in faith. But the Articles had been drawn up by Henry's own hand, and all whisper of oppo-

*The Irish
Churches.*

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sition was hushed. Bishops, abbots, clergy, not only subscribed to them, but carried out with implicit obedience the injunctions which put their doctrine roughly into practice; and the failure of the Pilgrimage of Grace in the following autumn ended all thought of resistance among the laity. But Cromwell found a different reception for his reforms when he turned to extend them to the sister island. The religious aspect of Ireland was hardly less chaotic than its political aspect had been. Ever since Strongbow's landing there had been no one Irish Church, simply because there had been no one Irish nation. There was not the slightest difference in doctrine or discipline between the Church without the Pale and the Church within it. But within the Pale the clergy were exclusively of English blood and speech, and without it they were exclusively of Irish. Irishmen were shut out by law from abbeys and churches within the English boundary; and the ill-will of the natives shut out Englishmen from churches and abbeys outside it. As to the religious state of the country, it was much on a level with its political condition. Feuds and misrule told fatally on ecclesiastical discipline. The bishops were political officers, or hard fighters like the chiefs around them; their sees were neglected, their cathedrals abandoned to decay. Through whole dioceses the churches lay in ruins and without priests. The only preaching done in the country was done by the begging friars, and the results of the friars' preaching were small. "If the King do not provide a remedy," it was said in 1525, "there will be no more Christentie than in the middle of Turkey."

Ireland
and the
Supremacy.

Unfortunately the remedy which Henry provided was worse than the disease. Politically Ireland was one with England, and the great revolution which was severing the one country from the Papacy extended itself naturally to the other. The results of it indeed at first seemed small enough. The Supremacy, a question which had convulsed England, passed over into Ireland to meet its only obstacle

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in a general indifference. Everybody was ready to accept it without a thought of the consequences. The bishops and clergy within the Pale bent to the King's will as easily as their fellows in England, and their example was followed by at least four prelates of dioceses without the Pale. The native chieftains made no more scruple than the Lords of the Council in renouncing obedience to the Bishop of Rome, and in acknowledging Henry as the "Supreme Head of the Church of England and Ireland under Christ." There was none of the resistance to the dissolution of the abbeys which had been witnessed on the other side of the Channel, and the greedy chieftains showed themselves perfectly willing to share the plunder of the Church. But the results of the measure were fatal to the little culture and religion which even the past centuries of disorder had spared. Such as they were, the religious houses were the only schools that Ireland contained. The system of vicars, so general in England, was rare in Ireland; churches in the patronage of the abbeys were for the most part served by the religious themselves, and the dissolution of their houses suspended public worship over large districts of the country. The friars, hitherto the only preachers, and who continued to labour and teach in spite of the efforts of the Government, were thrown necessarily into a position of antagonism to the English rule.

Had the ecclesiastical changes which were forced on the country ended here however, in the end little harm would have been done. But in England the breach with Rome, the destruction of the monastic orders, and the establishment of the Supremacy, had roused in a portion of the people itself a desire for theological change which Henry shared and was cautiously satisfying. In Ireland the spirit of the Reformation never existed among the people at all. They accepted the legislative measures passed in the English Parliament without any dream of theological consequences or of any change in the doctrine

Ireland
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Religious
Changes.

CHAP. IV. or ceremonies of the Church. Not a single voice demanded the abolition of pilgrimages, or the destruction of images, or the reform of public worship. The mission of Archbishop Browne in 1535 "for the plucking down of idols and extinguishing of idolatry" was a first step in the long effort of the English Government to force a new faith on a people who to a man clung passionately to their old religion. Browne's attempts at "tuning the pulpits" were met by a sullen and significant opposition. "Neither by gentle exhortation," the Archbishop wrote to Cromwell, "nor by evangelical instruction, neither by oath of them solemnly taken, nor yet by threats of sharp correction may I persuade or induce any whether religious or secular since my coming over once to preach the Word of God nor the just title of our illustrious Prince." Even the acceptance of the Supremacy, which had been so quietly effected, was brought into question when its results became clear. The bishops abstained from compliance with the order to erase the Pope's name out of their mass-books. The pulpits remained steadily silent. When Browne ordered the destruction of the images and relics in his own cathedral, he had to report that the prior and canons "find them so sweet for their gain that they heed not my words." Cromwell however was resolute for a religious uniformity between the two islands, and the Primate borrowed some of his patron's vigour. Recalcitrant priests were thrown into prison, images were plucked down from the rood-loft, and the most venerable of Irish relics, the staff of St. Patrick, was burned in the market-place. But he found no support in his vigour save from across the Channel. The Irish Council looked coldly on; even the Lord Deputy still knelt to say prayers before an image at Trim. A sullen dogged opposition baffled Cromwell's efforts, and their only result was to unite all Ireland against the Crown.

*The
English
Pro-
testants.*

But Cromwell found it easier to deal with Irish inaction than with the feverish activity which his reforms stirred in England itself. It was impossible to strike blow after blow

at the Church without rousing wild hopes in the party who sympathized with the work which Luther was doing overseas. Few as these 'Lutherans' or 'Protestants' still were in numbers, their new hopes made them a formidable force; and in the school of persecution they had learned a violence which delighted in outrages on the faith which had so long trampled them under foot. At the very outset of Cromwell's changes four Suffolk youths broke into a church at Dovercourt, tore down a wonder-working crucifix, and burned it in the fields. The suppression of the lesser monasteries was the signal for a new outburst of ribald insult to the old religion. The roughness, insolence, and extortion of the Commissioners sent to effect it drove the whole monastic body to despair. Their servants rode along the road with copes for doublets or tunics for saddle-cloths, and scattered panic among the larger houses which were left. Some sold their jewels and relics to provide for the evil day they saw approaching. Some begged of their own will for dissolution. It was worse when fresh ordinances of the Vicar-General ordered the removal of objects of superstitious veneration. Their removal, bitter enough to those whose religion twined itself around the image or the relic which was taken away, was embittered yet more by the insults with which it was accompanied. A miraculous rood at Boxley, which bowed its head and stirred its eyes, was paraded from market to market and exhibited as a juggle before the Court. Images of the Virgin were stripped of their costly vestments and sent to be publicly burned at London. Latimer forwarded to the capital the figure of Our Lady, which he had thrust out of his cathedral church at Worcester, with rough words of scorn: "She with her old sister of Walsingham, her younger sister of Ipswich, and their two other sisters of Doncaster and Penrice, would make a jolly muster at Smithfield." Fresh orders were given to fling all relics from their reliquaries, and to level every shrine with the ground. In 1538 the bones of St. Thomas of Canterbury

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CHAP. IV. were torn from the stately shrine which had been the glory of his metropolitan church, and his name was erased from the service-books as that of a traitor.

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The introduction of the English Bible into churches gave a new opening for the zeal of the Protestants. In spite of royal injunctions that it should be read decently and without comment, the young zealots of the party prided themselves on shouting it out to a circle of excited hearers during the service of mass, and accompanied their reading with violent expositions. Protestant maidens took the new English primer to church with them and studied it ostentatiously during matins. Insult passed into open violence when the Bishops' Courts were invaded and broken up by Protestant mobs; and law and public opinion were outraged at once when priests who favoured the new doctrines began openly to bring home wives to their vicarages. A fiery outburst of popular discussion compensated for the silence of the pulpits. The new Scriptures, in Henry's bitter words of complaint, were "disputed, rimed, sung, and jangled in every tavern and alehouse." The articles which dictated the belief of the English Church roused a furious controversy. Above all, the Sacrament of the Mass, the centre of the Catholic system of faith and worship, and which still remained sacred to the bulk of Englishmen, was attacked with a scurrility and profaneness which passes belief. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was as yet recognized by law, was held up to scorn in ballads and mystery plays. In one church a Protestant lawyer raised a dog in his hands when the priest elevated the Host. The most sacred words of the old worship, the words of consecration, "Hoc est corpus," were travestied into a nickname for jugglery as "Hocus-pocus."

The Six
Articles.

It was by this attack on the Mass, even more than by the other outrages, that the temper both of Henry and the nation was stirred to a deep resentment. With the Protestants Henry had no sympathy whatever. He was a man of the New Learning; he was proud of his orthodoxy

and of his title of Defender of the Faith. And above all he shared to the utmost his people's love of order, their clinging to the past, their hatred of extravagance and excess. The first sign of reaction was seen in the Parliament of 1539. Never had the Houses shown so little care for political liberty. The Monarchy seemed to free itself from all parliamentary restrictions whatever when a formal statute gave the King's proclamations the force of parliamentary laws. Nor did the Church find favour with them. No word of the old opposition was heard when a bill was introduced granting to the King the greater monasteries which had been saved in 1536. More than six hundred religious houses fell at a blow, and so great was the spoil that the King promised never again to call on his people for subsidies. But the Houses were equally at one in withstanding the new innovations in religion, and an act for "abolishing diversity of opinions in certain articles concerning Christian religion" passed with general assent. On the doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was re-asserted by the first of six Articles to which the Act owes its usual name, there was no difference of feeling or belief between the men of the New Learning and the older Catholics. But the road to a further instalment of even moderate reform seemed closed by the five other articles which sanctioned communion in one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, monastic vows, private masses, and auricular confession. A more terrible feature of the reaction was the revival of persecution. Burning was denounced as the penalty for a denial of transubstantiation; on a second offence it became the penalty for an infraction of the other five doctrines. A refusal to confess or to attend Mass was made felony. It was in vain that Cranmer, with the five bishops who partially sympathized with the Protestants, struggled against the bill in the Lords: the Commons were "all of one opinion," and Henry himself acted as spokesman on the side of the articles. In London alone five hundred Protestants were indicted under the new act. Latimer and

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CHAP. IV. Shaxton were imprisoned, and the former forced into a resignation of his see. Cranmer himself was only saved by Henry's personal favour.

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Cromwell's
last
Struggle.

But the first burst of triumph was no sooner spent than the hand of Cromwell made itself felt. Though his opinions remained those of the New Learning and differed little from the general sentiment which found itself represented in the act, he leaned instinctively to the one party which did not long for his fall. His wish was to restrain the Protestant excesses, but he had no mind to ruin the Protestants. In a little time therefore the bishops were quietly released. The London indictments were quashed. The magistrates were checked in their enforcement of the law, while a general pardon cleared the prisons of the heretics who had been arrested under its provisions. A few months after the enactment of the Six Articles we find from a Protestant letter that persecution had wholly ceased, "the Word is powerfully preached and books of every kind may safely be exposed for sale." Never indeed had Cromwell shown such greatness as in his last struggle against Fate. "Beknaved" by the King, whose confidence in him waned as he discerned the full meaning of the religious changes which Cromwell had brought about, met too by a growing opposition in the Council as his favour declined, the temper of the man remained indomitable as ever. He stood absolutely alone. Wolsey, hated as he had been by the nobles, had been supported by the Church; but Churchmen hated Cromwell with an even fiercer hate than the nobles themselves. His only friends were the Protestants, and their friendship was more fatal than the hatred of his foes. But he showed no signs of fear or of halting in the course he had entered on. So long as Henry supported him, however reluctant his support might be, he was more than a match for his foes. He was strong enough to expel his chief opponent, Bishop Gardiner of Winchester, from the royal Council. He met the hostility of the nobles with a threat which marked his

power. "If the lords would handle him so, he would give them such a breakfast as never was made in England, and that the proudest of them should know."

He soon gave a terrible earnest of the way in which he could fulfil his threat. The opposition to his system gathered above all round two houses which represented what yet lingered of the Yorkist tradition, the Courtenays and the Poles. Courtenay, the Marquis of Exeter, was of royal blood, a grandson through his mother of Edward the Fourth. He was known to have bitterly denounced the "knaves that ruled about the King;" and his threats to "give them some day a buffet" were formidable in the mouth of one whose influence in the western counties was supreme. Margaret, the Countess of Salisbury, a daughter of the Duke of Clarence by the heiress of the Earl of Warwick, and a niece of Edward the Fourth, had married Sir Richard Pole, and became mother of Lord Montacute as of Sir Geoffry and Reginald Pole. The temper of her house might be guessed from the conduct of the younger of the three brothers. After refusing the highest favours from Henry as the price of his approval of the divorce, Reginald Pole had taken refuge at Rome, where he had bitterly attacked the King in a book on "The Unity of the Church." "There may be found ways enough in Italy," Cromwell wrote to him in significant words, "to rid a treacherous subject. When Justice can take no place by process of law at home, sometimes she may be enforced to take new means abroad." But he had left hostages in Henry's hands. "Pity that the folly of one witless fool," Cromwell wrote ominously, "should be the ruin of so great a family. Let him follow ambition as fast as he can, those that little have offended (saving that he is of their kin), were it not for the great mercy and benignity of the prince, should and might feel what it is to have such a traitor as their kinsman." The "great mercy and benignity of the prince" was no longer to shelter them. In 1538 the Pope, Paul the Third, published a bull of excommunication and deposition against

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The
Courtenays
and the
Poles.

CHAP. IV. Henry, and Pole pressed the Emperor vigorously though ineffectually to carry the bull into execution. His efforts only brought about, as Cromwell had threatened, the ruin of his house. His brother Lord Montacute and the Marquis of Exeter, with other friends of the two great families, were arrested on a charge of treason and executed in the opening of 1539, while the Countess of Salisbury was attainted in Parliament and sent to the Tower.

*The
Lutheran
Marriage.*

Almost as terrible an act of bloodshed closed the year. The abbots of Glastonbury, Reading, and Colchester, men who had sate as mitred abbots among the lords, were charged with a denial of the King's supremacy and hanged as traitors. But Cromwell relied for success on more than terror. His single will forced on a scheme of foreign policy whose aim was to bind England to the cause of the Reformation while it bound Henry helplessly to his minister. The daring boast which his enemies laid afterwards to Cromwell's charge, whether uttered or not, is but the expression of his system, "In brief time he would bring things to such a pass that the King with all his power should not be able to hinder him." His plans rested, like the plan which proved fatal to Wolsey, on a fresh marriage of his master. Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour, had died in child-birth; and in the opening of 1540 Cromwell replaced her by a German consort, Anne of Cleves, a sister-in-law of the Lutheran elector of Saxony. He dared even to resist Henry's caprice when the King revolted on their first interview from the coarse features and unwieldy form of his new bride. For the moment Cromwell had brought matters "to such a pass" that it was impossible to recoil from the marriage, and the minister's elevation to the Earldom of Essex seemed to proclaim his success. The marriage of Anne of Cleves however was but the first step in a policy which, had it been carried out as he designed it, would have anticipated the triumphs of Richelieu. Charles and the House of Austria could alone bring about a Catholic

reaction strong enough to arrest and roll back the Reformation; and Cromwell was no sooner united with the princes of North Germany than he sought to league them with France for the overthrow of the Emperor.

Had he succeeded, the whole face of Europe would have been changed, Southern Germany would have been secured for Protestantism, and the Thirty Years' War averted. But he failed as men fail who stand ahead of their age. The German princes shrank from a contest with the Emperor, France from a struggle which would be fatal to Catholicism; and Henry, left alone to bear the resentment of the House of Austria and chained to a wife he loathed, turned savagely on his minister. In June the long struggle came to an end. The nobles sprang on Cromwell with a fierceness that told of their long-hoarded hate. Taunts and execrations burst from the Lords at the Council table as the Duke of Norfolk, who had been entrusted with the minister's arrest, tore the ensign of the Garter from his neck. At the charge of treason Cromwell flung his cap on the ground with a passionate cry of despair. "This then," he exclaimed, "is my guerdon for the services I have done! On your consciences, I ask you, am I a traitor?" Then with a sudden sense that all was over he bade his foes make quick work, and not leave him to languish in prison. Quick work was made. A few days after his arrest he was attainted in Parliament, and at the close of July a burst of popular applause hailed his death on the scaffold.

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*Fall of
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BOOK VI.

THE REFORMATION.

1540—1603.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VI.

1540—1603.

For the close of Henry the Eighth's reign as for the reigns of Edward and Mary we possess copious materials. Strype covers this period in his "Memorials" and in his lives of Cranmer, Cheke, and Smith; Hayward's "Life of Edward the Sixth" may be supplemented by the young King's own Journal; "Machyn's Diary" gives us the aspect of affairs as they presented themselves to a common Englishman; while Holinshed is near enough to serve as a contemporary authority. The troubled period of the Protectorate is illustrated by Mr. Tytler in the correspondence which he has published in his "England under Edward the Sixth and Mary," while much light is thrown on its close by Mr. Nicholls in the "Chronicle of Queen Jane," published by the Camden Society. In spite of countless errors, of Puritan prejudices, and some deliberate suppressions of the truth, its mass of facts and wonderful charm of style will always give importance to the "Acts and Monuments" or "Book of Martyrs" of John Foxe, as a record of the Marian persecution. Among outer observers, the Venetian Soranzo throws some light on the Protectorate; and the despatches of Giovanni Michiel, published by Mr. Friedmann, give us a new insight into the events of Mary's reign.

For the succeeding reign we have a valuable contemporary account in Camden's "Life of Elizabeth." The "Annals" of Sir John Hayward refer to the first four years of the Queen's rule. Its political and diplomatic side is only now being fully unveiled in the Calendar of State Papers for this period, which are being issued by the Master of the Rolls, and fresh light has yet to be looked for from the Cecil Papers and the documents at Simancas, some of which are embodied in the history of this reign by Mr. Froude. Among the published materials for this time we have the Burleigh Papers, the Sidney Papers, the Sadler State Papers, much correspondence in the Hardwicke State Papers, the letters published by Mr. Wright in his "Elizabeth and her Times," the collections of Murdin, the Egerton Papers, the "Letters of Elizabeth and James the Sixth" published by Mr. Bruce. Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ" contain some details of value. Among foreign materials as yet published the "Papiers d'État" of Cardinal Granvelle and the series of French despatches published by M. Teulet

are among the more important. Mr. Motley in his "Rise of the Dutch Republic" and "History of the United Netherlands" has used the State Papers of the countries concerned in this struggle to pour a flood of new light on the diplomacy and outer policy of Burleigh and his mistress. His wide and independent research among the same class of documents gives almost an original value to Ranke's treatment of this period in his English History. The earlier religious changes in Scotland have been painted with wonderful energy, and on the whole with truthfulness, by Knox himself in his "History of the Reformation." Among the contemporary materials for the history of Mary Stuart we have the well known works of Buchanan and Leslie, Labanoff's "Lettres et Mémoires de Marie Stuart," the correspondence appended to Mignet's biography, Stevenson's "Illustrations of the Life of Queen Mary," Melville's Memoirs, and the collections of Keith and Anderson.

For the religious history of Elizabeth's reign Strype, as usual, gives us copious details in his "Annals," his lives of Parker, Grindal, and Whitgift. Some light is thrown on the Queen's earlier steps by the Zürich Letters published by the Parker Society. The strife with the later Puritans can only be fairly judged after reading the Martin Marprelate Tracts, which have been reprinted by Mr. Maskell, who has given a short abstract of the more important in his "History of the Martin Marprelate Controversy." Her policy towards the Catholics is set out in Burleigh's tract "The Execution of Justice in England, not for Religion, but for Treason," which was answered by Allen in his "Defense of the English Catholics." On the actual working of the penal laws much new information has been given us in the series of contemporary narratives published by Father Morris under the title of "The Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers;" the general history of the Catholics may be found in the work of Dodd; and the sufferings of the Jesuits in More's "Historia Provinciæ Anglicanæ Societatis Jesu." To these may be added Mr. Simpson's biography of Campion. For our constitutional history during Elizabeth's reign we have D'Ewes' Journals and Townshend's "Journal of Parliamentary Proceedings from 1580 to 1601," the first detailed account we possess of the proceedings of the House of Commons. Macpherson in his Annals of Commerce gives details of the wonderful expansion of English trade during this period, and Hackluyt's collection of Voyages tells of its wonderful activity. Amidst a crowd of biographers, whose number marks the new importance of individual life and action at the time, we may note as embodying information elsewhere inaccessible the lives of Hatton and Davison by Sir Harris Nicolas, the three accounts of Raleigh by Oldys, Tytler, and Mr. Edwards, the Lives of the two Devereux, Earls of Essex, Mr. Spedding's "Life of Bacon," and Barrow's "Life of Sir Francis Drake."

CHAPTER I.

THE PROTESTANT REVOLUTION.

1540—1553.

At the death of Cromwell the success of his policy was complete. The Monarchy had reached the height of its power. The old liberties of England lay prostrate at the feet of the King. The Lords were cowed and spiritless; the House of Commons was filled with the creatures of the Court and degraded into an engine of tyranny. Royal proclamations were taking the place of parliamentary legislation; royal benevolences were encroaching more and more on the right of parliamentary taxation. Justice was prostituted in the ordinary courts to the royal will, while the boundless and arbitrary powers of the royal Council were gradually superseding the slower processes of the Common Law. The religious changes had thrown an almost sacred character over the "majesty" of the King. Henry was the Head of the Church. From the primate to the meanest deacon every minister of it derived from him his sole right to exercise spiritual powers. The voice of its preachers was the echo of his will. He alone could define orthodoxy or declare heresy. The forms of its worship and belief were changed and rechanged at the royal caprice. Half of its wealth went to swell the royal treasury, and the other half lay at the King's mercy. It was this unprecedented concentration of all power in the hands of a single man that overawed the imagination of Henry's subjects. He was regarded as something high

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and the
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above the laws which govern common men. The voices of statesmen and priests extolled his wisdom and authority as more than human. The Parliament itself rose and bowed to the vacant throne when his name was mentioned. An absolute devotion to his person replaced the old loyalty to the law. When the Primate of the English Church described the chief merit of Cromwell, it was by asserting that he loved the King "no less than he loved God."

*Cromwell
and the
Parliament.*

It was indeed Cromwell who more than any man had reared this fabric of King-worship. But he had hardly reared it when it began to give way. The very success of his measures indeed brought about the ruin of his policy. One of the most striking features of Cromwell's system had been his development of parliamentary action. The great assembly which the Monarchy had dreaded and silenced from the days of Edward the Fourth to the days of Wolsey had been called to the front again at the Cardinal's fall. Proud of his popularity, and conscious of his people's sympathy with him in his protest against a foreign jurisdiction, Henry set aside the policy of the Crown to deal a heavier blow at the Papacy. Both the parties represented in the ministry that followed Wolsey welcomed the change, for the nobles represented by Norfolk and the men of the New Learning represented by More regarded Parliament with the same favour. More indeed in significant though almost exaggerated phrases set its omnipotence face to face with the growing despotism of the Crown. The policy of Cromwell fell in with this revival of the two Houses. The daring of his temper led him not to dread and suppress national institutions, but to seize them and master them, and to turn them into means of enhancing the royal power. As he saw in the Church a means of raising the King into the spiritual ruler of the faith and consciences of his people, so he saw in the Parliament a means of shrouding the boldest aggressions of the monarchy under the veil of popular assent, and

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of giving to the most ruthless acts of despotism the stamp and semblance of law. He saw nothing to fear in a House of Lords whose nobles cowered helpless before the might of the Crown, and whose spiritual members his policy was degrading into mere tools of the royal will. Nor could he find anything to dread in a House of Commons which was crowded with members directly or indirectly nominated by the royal Council. With a Parliament such as this Cromwell might well trust to make the nation itself through its very representatives an accomplice in the work of absolutism.

His trust seemed more than justified by the conduct of the Houses. It was by parliamentary statutes that the Church was prostrated at the feet of the Monarchy. It was by bills of attainder that great nobles were brought to the block. It was under constitutional forms that freedom was gagged with new treasons and oaths and questionings. One of the first bills of Cromwell's Parliaments freed Henry from the need of paying his debts, one of the last gave his proclamations the force of laws. In the action of the two Houses the Crown seemed to have discovered a means of carrying its power into regions from which a bare despotism has often had to shrink. Henry might have dared single-handed to break with Rome or to send Sir Thomas More to the block. But without Parliament to back him he could hardly have ventured on such an enormous confiscation of property as was involved in the suppression of the monasteries or on such changes in the national religion as were brought about by the Ten Articles and the Six. It was this discovery of the use to which the Houses could be turned that accounts for the immense development of their powers, the immense widening of their range of action, which they owe to Cromwell. Now that the great engine was at his own command he used it as it had never been used before. Instead of rare and short assemblies of Parliament, England saw it gathered year after year. All the jealousy with which the Crown

*Growth of
Parliamentary
Power.*

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had watched its older encroachments on the prerogative was set aside. Matters which had even in the days of their greatest influence been scrupulously withheld from the cognizance of the Houses were now absolutely forced on their attention. It was by Parliament that England was torn from the great body of Western Christendom. It was by parliamentary enactment that the English Church was reft of its older liberties and made absolutely subservient to the Crown. It was a parliamentary statute that defined the very faith and religion of the land. The vastest confiscation of landed property which England had ever witnessed was wrought by Parliament. It regulated the succession to the throne. It decided on the validity of the King's marriages and the legitimacy of the King's children. Former sovereigns had struggled against the claim of the Houses to meddle with the royal ministers or with members of the royal household. Now Parliament was called on by the King himself to attain his ministers and his Queens.

The New
Nobles.

The fearlessness and completeness of such a policy as this brings home to us more than any other of his plans the genius of Cromwell. But its success depended wholly on the absolute servility of Parliament to the will of the Crown, and Cromwell's own action made the continuance of such a servility impossible. The part which the Houses were to play in after years shows the importance of clinging to the forms of constitutional freedom, even when their life is all but lost. In the inevitable reaction against tyranny they furnish centres for the reviving energies of the people, while the returning tide of liberty is enabled through their preservation to flow quietly and naturally along its traditional channels. And even before Cromwell passed to his doom the tide of liberty was returning. On one occasion during his rule a "great debate" on the suppression of the lesser monasteries showed that elements of resistance still survived; and these elements developed rapidly as the power of the Crown de-

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clined under the minority of Edward and the unpopularity of Mary. To this revival of a spirit of independence the spoliation of the Church largely contributed. Partly from necessity, partly from a desire to build up a faction interested in the maintenance of their ecclesiastical policy, Cromwell and the King squandered the vast mass of wealth which flowed into the Treasury from the dissolution of the monasteries with reckless prodigality. Three hundred and seventy-six smaller houses had been suppressed in 1536; six hundred and forty-five greater houses were surrendered or seized in 1539. Some of the spoil was devoted to the erection of six new bishopricks; a larger part went to the fortification of the coast. But the bulk of these possessions were granted lavishly away to the nobles and courtiers about the King, and to a host of adventurers who "had become gospellers for the abbey lands." Something like a fifth of the actual land in the kingdom was in this way transferred from the holding of the Church to that of nobles and gentry. Not only were the older houses enriched, but a new aristocracy was erected from among the dependants of the Court. The Russells and the Cavendishes are familiar instances of families which rose from obscurity through the enormous grants of Church-land made to Henry's courtiers. The old baronage was thus hardly crushed before a new aristocracy took its place. "Those families within or without the bounds of the peerage," observes Mr. Hallam, "who are now deemed the most considerable, will be found, with no great number of exceptions, to have first become conspicuous under the Tudor line of kings and, if we could trace the title of their estates, to have acquired no small portion of them mediately or immediately from monastic or other ecclesiastical foundations." The leading part which these freshly created peers took in the events which followed Henry's death gave strength and vigour to the whole order. But the smaller gentry shared in the general enrichment of the landed proprietors, and the new energy of the

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Lords was soon followed by a display of political independence among the Commons themselves.

While the prodigality of Cromwell's system thus brought into being a new check upon the Crown by enriching the nobles and the lesser gentry, the religious changes it brought about gave fire and vigour to the elements of opposition which were slowly gathering. What did most to ruin the King-worship that Cromwell set up was Cromwell's ecclesiastical policy. In reducing the Church to mere slavery beneath the royal power he believed himself to be trampling down the last constitutional force which could hold the Monarchy in check. What he really did was to give life and energy to new forces which were bound from their very nature to battle with the Monarchy for even more than the old English freedom. When Cromwell seized on the Church he held himself to be seizing for the Crown the mastery which the Church had wielded till now over the consciences and reverence of men. But the very humiliation of the great religious body broke the spell beneath which Englishmen had bowed. In form nothing had been changed. The outer constitution of the Church remained utterly unaltered. The English bishop, freed from the papal control, freed from the check of monastic independence, seemed greater and more imposing than ever. The priest still clung to rectory and church. If images were taken out of churches, if here and there a rood-loft was pulled down or a saint's shrine demolished, no change was made in form of ritual or mode of worship. The mass was untouched. Every hymn, every prayer was still in Latin; confession, penance, fastings and feastings, extreme unction, went on as before. There was little to show that any change had taken place; and yet every ploughman felt that all was changed. The bishop, gorgeous as he might be in mitre and cope, was a mere tool of the King. The priest was trembling before heretics he used to burn. Farmer or shopkeeper might enter their church any Sunday morning to find mass or

service utterly transformed. The spell of tradition, of unbroken continuance, was over; and with it the power which the Church had wielded over the souls of men was in great part done away.

It was not that the new Protestantism was as yet formidable, for violent and daring as they were, the adherents of Luther were few in number, and drawn mostly from the poorer classes among whom Wyclifite heresy had lingered or from the class of scholars whose theological studies drew their sympathy to the movement over sea. It was that the lump was now ready to be leavened by this petty leaven, that men's hold on the firm ground of custom was broken and their minds set drifting and questioning, that little as was the actual religious change, the thought of religious change had become familiar to the people as a whole. And with religious change was certain to come religious revolt. The human conscience was hardly likely to move everywhere in strict time to the slow advance of Henry's reforms. Men who had been roused from implicit obedience to the Papacy as a revelation of the Divine will by hearing the Pope denounced in royal proclamations as a usurper and an impostor were hardly inclined to take up submissively the new official doctrine which substituted implicit belief in the King for implicit belief in the "Bishop of Rome." But bound as Church and King now were together, it was impossible to deny a tenet of the one without entering on a course of opposition to the other. Cromwell had raised against the Monarchy the most fatal of all enemies, the force of the individual conscience, the enthusiasm of religious belief, the fire of religious fanaticism. Slowly as the area of the new Protestantism extended, every man that it gained was a possible opponent of the Crown. And should the time come, as the time was soon to come, when the Crown moved to the side of Protestantism, then in turn every soul that the older faith retained was pledged to a lifelong combat with the Monarchy.

How irresistible was the national drift was seen on

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Cromwell's fall. Its first result indeed promised to be a reversal of all that Cromwell had done. Norfolk returned to power, and his influence over Henry seemed secured by the King's repudiation of Anne of Cleves and his marriage in the summer of 1540 to a niece of the Duke, Catharine Howard. But Norfolk's temper had now become wholly hostile to the movement about him. "I never read the Scripture nor never will!" the Duke replied hotly to a Protestant arguer. "It was merry in England afore the new learning came up; yea, I would all things were as hath been in times past." In his preference of an Imperial alliance to an alliance with Francis and the Lutherans Henry went warmly with his minister. Parted as he had been from Charles by the question of the divorce, the King's sympathies had remained true to the Emperor; and at this moment he was embittered against France by the difficulties it threw in the way of his projects for gaining a hold upon Scotland. Above all the King still clung to the hope of a purification of the Church by a Council, as well as of a reconciliation of England with the general body of this purified Christendom, and it was only by the Emperor that such a Council could be convened or such a reconciliation brought about. An alliance with him was far from indicating any retreat from Henry's position of independence or any submission to the Papacy. To the men of his own day Charles seemed no Catholic bigot. On the contrary the stricter representatives of Catholicism such as Paul the Fourth denounced him as a patron of heretics, and attributed the upgrowth of Lutheranism to his steady protection and encouragement. Nor was the charge without seeming justification. The old jealousy between Pope and Emperor, the more recent hostility between them as rival Italian powers, had from the beginning proved Luther's security. At the first appearance of the reformer Maximilian had recommended the Elector of Saxony to suffer no harm to be done to him; "there might come a time," said the old Emperor, "when he would be needed."

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Charles had looked on the matter mainly in the same political way. In his earliest years he bought Leo's aid in his recovery of Milan from the French king by issuing the ban of the Empire against Luther in the Diet of Worms; but every Italian held that in suffering the reformer to withdraw unharmed Charles had shown not so much regard to his own safe-conduct as a purpose still "to keep the Pope in check with that rein." And as Charles dealt with Luther so he dealt with Lutheranism. The new faith profited by the Emperor's struggle with Clement the Seventh for the lordship over Italy. It was in the midst of this struggle that his brother and representative, Ferdinand, signed in the Diet of Spire an Imperial decree by which the German States were left free to arrange their religious affairs "as each should best answer to God and the Emperor." The decree gave a legal existence to the Protestant body in the Empire which it never afterwards lost.

Such a step might well encourage the belief that Charles was himself inclining to Lutheranism; and the belief gathered strength as he sent Lutheran armies over the Alps to sack Rome and to hold the Pope a prisoner. The belief was a false one, for Charles remained utterly untouched by the religious movement about him; but even when his strife with the Papacy was to a great extent lulled by Clement's submission, he still turned a deaf ear to the Papal appeals for dealing with Lutheranism by fire and sword. His political interests and the conception which he held of his duty as Emperor alike swayed him to milder counsels. He purposed indeed to restore religious unity. His political aim was to bring Germany to his feet as he had brought Italy; and he saw that the religious schism was the great obstacle in the way of his realizing this design. As the temporal head of the Catholic world he was still more strongly bent to heal the breaches of Catholicism. But he had no wish to insist on an unconditional submission to the Papacy. He believed that there were evils

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to be cured on the one side as on the other; and Charles saw the high position which awaited him if as Emperor he could bring about a reformation of the Church and a reunion of Christendom. Violent as Luther's words had been, the Lutheran princes and the bulk of Lutheran theologians had not yet come to look on Catholicism as an irreconcilable foe. Even on the papal side there was a learned and active party, a party headed by Contarini and Pole, whose theological sympathies went in many points with the Lutherans, and who looked to the winning back of the Lutherans as the needful prelude to any reform in the doctrine and practice of the Church; while Melancthon was as hopeful as Contarini that such a reform might be wrought and the Church again become universal. In his proposal of a Council to carry on the double work of purification and reunion therefore Charles stood out as the representative of the larger part both of the Catholic and the Protestant world. Against such a proposal however Rome struggled hard. All her tradition was against Councils, where the assembled bishops had in earlier days asserted their superiority to the Pope, and where the Emperor who convened the assembly and carried out its decrees rose into dangerous rivalry with the Papacy. Crushed as he was, Clement the Seventh throughout his lifetime held the proposal of a Council stubbornly at bay. But under his successor, Paul the Third, the influence of Contarini and the moderate Catholics secured a more favourable reception of plans of reconciliation. In April, 1541, conferences for this purpose were in fact opened at Augsburg in which Contarini, as Papal legate, accepted a definition of the moot question of justification by faith which satisfied Bucer and Melancthon. On the other side, the Landgrave of Hesse and the Elector of Brandenburg publicly declared that they believed it possible to come to terms on the yet more vexed questions of the Mass and the Papal supremacy. Never had the reunion of the world seemed so near; and the hopes that were stirring found an echo in England

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as well as in Germany. We can hardly doubt indeed that it was the revival of these hopes which had brought about the fall of Cromwell and the recall of Norfolk to power. Norfolk, like his master, looked to a purification of the Church by a Council as the prelude to a reconciliation of England with the general body of Catholicism; and both saw that it was by the influence of the Emperor alone that such a Council could be brought about. Charles on the other hand was ready to welcome Henry's advances. The quarrel over Catharine had ended with her death; and the wrong done her had been in part atoned for by the fall of Anne Boleyn. The aid of Henry too was needed to hold in check the opposition of France. The chief means which France still possessed of holding the Emperor at bay lay in the disunion of the Empire, and it was resolute to preserve this weapon against him at whatever cost to Christendom. While Francis remonstrated at Rome against the concessions made to the Lutherans by the Legates, he urged the Lutheran princes to make no terms with the Papacy. To the Protestants he held out hopes of his own conversion, while he promised Pope Paul that he would defend him with his life against Emperor and heretics. His intrigues were aided by the suspicions of both the religious parties. Luther refused to believe in the sincerity of the concessions made by the Legates; Paul the Third held aloof from them in sullen silence. Meanwhile Francis was preparing to raise more material obstacles to the Emperor's designs. Charles had bought his last reconciliation with the King by a promise of restoring the Milanese, but he had no serious purpose of ever fulfilling his pledge, and his retention of the Duchy gave the French King a fair pretext for threatening a renewal of the war.

England, as Francis hoped, he could hold in check through his alliance with the Scots. After the final expulsion of Albany in 1524 Scottish history became little more than a strife between Margaret Tudor and her husband,

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the Earl of Angus, for power; but the growth of James the Fifth to manhood at last secured rest for the land. James had all the varied ability of his race, and he carried out with vigour its traditional policy. The Highland chieftains, the great lords of the Lowlands, were brought more under the royal sway; the Church was strengthened to serve as a check on the feudal baronage; the alliance with France was strictly preserved, as the one security against English aggression. Nephew as he was indeed of the English King, James from the outset of his reign took up an attitude hostile to England. He was jealous of the influence which the two Henries had established in his realm by the marriage of Margaret and by the building up of an English party under the Douglasses; the great Churchmen who formed his most trusted advisers dreaded the influence of the religious changes across the border; while the people clung to their old hatred of England and their old dependence on France. It was only by two inroads of the border lords that Henry checked the hostile intrigues of James in 1532; his efforts to influence his nephew by an interview and alliance were met by the King's marriage with two French wives in succession, Magdalen of Valois, a daughter of Francis, and Mary, a daughter of the Duke of Guise. In 1539 when the projected coalition between France and the Empire threatened England, it had been needful to send Norfolk with an army to the Scotch frontier, and now that France was again hostile Norfolk had to move anew to the border in the autumn of 1541.

*Defeat
at the
Solway.*

While the Duke was fruitlessly endeavouring to bring James to fresh friendship a sudden blow at home weakened his power. At the close of the year Catharine Howard was arrested on a charge of adultery; a Parliament which assembled in January 1542 passed a Bill of Attainder; and in February the Queen was sent to the block. She was replaced by the widow of Lord Latimer, Catharine Parr; and the influence of Norfolk in the King's

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counsels gradually gave way to that of Bishop Gardiner of Winchester. But Henry clung to the policy which the Duke favoured. At the end of 1541 two great calamities, the loss of Hungary after a victory of the Turks and a crushing defeat at Algiers, so weakened Charles that in the summer of the following year Francis ventured to attack him. The attack served only to draw closer the negotiations between England and the Emperor; and Francis was forced, as he had threatened, to give Henry work to occupy him at home. The busiest counsellor of the Scotch King, Cardinal Beaton, crossed the seas to negotiate a joint attack, and the attitude of Scotland became so menacing that in the autumn of 1542 Norfolk was again sent to the border with twenty thousand men. But terrible as were his ravages, he could not bring the Scotch army to an engagement, and want of supplies soon forced him to fall back over the border. It was in vain that James urged his nobles to follow him in a counter invasion. They were ready to defend their country; but the memory of Flodden was still fresh, and success in England would only give dangerous strength to a King in whom they saw an enemy. But James was as stubborn in his purpose as the lords. Anxious only to free himself from their presence, he waited till the two armies had alike withdrawn, and then suddenly summoned his subjects to meet him in arms on the western border. A disorderly host gathered at Lochmaben and passed into Cumberland; but the English borderers followed on them fast, and were preparing to attack when at nightfall on the twenty-fifth of November a panic seized the whole Scotch force. Lost in the darkness and cut off from retreat by the Solway Firth, thousands of men with all the baggage and guns fell into the hands of the pursuers. The news of this rout fell on the young King like a sentence of death. For a while he wandered desperately from palace to palace till at the opening of December the tidings met him at Falkirk that his queen Mary of Guise, had given birth to a child.

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His two boys had both died in youth, and he was longing passionately for an heir to the crown which was slipping from his grasp. But the child was a daughter, the Mary Stuart of later history. "The deil go with it," muttered the dying king, as his mind fell back to the close of the line of Bruce and the marriage with Robert's daughter which brought the Stuarts to the Scottish throne, "The deil go with it! It will end as it began. It came with a lass and it will end with a lass." A few days later he died.

The
Marriage
Treaty.

The death of James did more than remove a formidable foe. It opened up for the first time a prospect of that union of the two kingdoms which was at last to close their long hostility. Scotland, torn by factions and with a babe for queen, seemed to lie at Henry's feet: and the King seized the opportunity of completing his father's work by a union of the realms. At the opening of 1543 he proposed to the Scotch regent, the Earl of Arran, the marriage of the infant Mary Stuart with his son Edward. To ensure this bridal he demanded that Mary should at once be sent to England, the four great fortresses of Scotland be placed in English hands, and a voice given to Henry himself in the administration of the Scotch Council of Regency. Arran and the Queen-mother, rivals as they were, vied with each other in apparent goodwill to the marriage; but there was a steady refusal to break the league with France, and the "English lords," as the Douglas faction were called, owned themselves helpless in face of the national jealousy of English ambition. The temper of the nation itself was seen in the answer made by the Scotch Parliament which gathered in the spring. If they consented to the young Queen's betrothal, they not only rejected the demands which accompanied the proposal, but insisted that in case of such a union Scotland should have a perpetual regent of its own, and that this office should be hereditary in the House of Arran. Warned by his very partizans that the delivery of

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Mary was impossible, that if such a demand were pressed "there was not so little a boy but he would hurl stones against it, the wives would handle their distaffs, and the commons would universally die in it," Henry's proposals dropped in July to a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, he suffered France to be included among the allies of Scotland named in it, he consented that the young Queen should remain with her mother till the age of ten, and offered guarantees for the maintenance of Scotch independence.

Scotland
and
France.

But modify it as he might, Henry knew that such a project of union could only be carried out by a war with Francis. His negotiations for a treaty with Charles had long been delayed through Henry's wish to drag the Emperor into an open breach with the Papacy, but at the moment of the King's first proposals for the marriage of Mary Stuart with his son the need of finding a check upon France forced on a formal alliance with the Emperor in February 1543. The two allies agreed that the war should be continued till the Duchy of Burgundy had been restored to the Emperor and till England had recovered Normandy and Guienne; while the joint fleets of Henry and Charles held the Channel and sheltered England from any danger of French attack. The main end of this treaty was doubtless to give Francis work at home which might prevent the despatch of a French force into Scotland and the overthrow of Henry's hopes of a Scotch marriage. These hopes were strengthened as the summer went on by the acceptance of his later proposals in a Parliament which was packed by the Regent, and by the actual conclusion of a marriage treaty. But if Francis could spare neither horse nor man for action in Scotland his influence in the northern kingdom was strong enough to foil Henry's plans. The Churchmen were as bitterly opposed to such a marriage as the partizans of France; and their head, Cardinal Beaton, who had held aloof from the Regent's Parliament, suddenly seized the Queen-

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mother and her babe, crowned the infant Mary, called a Parliament in December which annulled the marriage-treaty, and set Henry at defiance.

The King's wrath at this overthrow of his hopes showed itself in a brutal and impolitic act of vengeance. He was a skilful shipbuilder; and among the many enterprizes which the restless genius of Cromwell undertook there was probably none in which Henry took so keen an interest as in his creation of an English fleet. Hitherto merchant ships had been impressed when a fleet was needed; but the progress of naval warfare had made the maintenance of an armed force at sea a condition of maritime power, and the resources furnished by the dissolution of the abbeys had been devoted in part to the building of ships of war, the largest of which, the *Mary Rose*, carried a crew of seven hundred men. The new strength which England was to wield in its navy was first seen in 1544. An army was gathered under Lord Hertford; and while Scotland was looking for the usual advance over the border the Earl's forces were quietly put on board and the English fleet appeared on the third of May in the Firth of Forth. The surprize made resistance impossible. Leith was seized and sacked, Edinburgh, then a town of wooden houses, was given to the flames, and burned for three days and three nights. The country for seven miles round was harried into a desert. The blow was a hard one, but it was little likely to bring Scotchmen round to Henry's projects of union. A brutal raid of the English borderers on Melrose and the destruction of his ancestors' tombs estranged the Earl of Angus, and was quickly avenged by his overthrow of the marauders at Ancrum Moor. Henry had yet to learn the uselessness of mere force to compass his ends. "I shall be glad to serve the King of England, with my honour," said the Lord of Buccleugh to an English envoy, "but I will not be constrained thereto if all Teviotdale be burned to the bottom of hell."

Hertford's force returned in good time to join the army

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which Henry in person was gathering at Calais to co-operate with the forces assembled by Charles on the north-eastern frontier of France. Each sovereign found himself at the head of forty thousand men, and the Emperor's military ability was seen in his proposal for an advance of both armies upon Paris. But though Henry found no French force in his front, his cautious temper shrank from the risk of leaving fortresses in his rear; and while their allies pushed boldly past Chalons on the capital, the English troops were detained till September in the capture of Boulogne, and only left Boulogne to form the siege of Montreuil. The French were thus enabled to throw their whole force on the Emperor, and Charles found himself in a position from which negotiation alone could extricate him.

His ends were in fact gained by the humiliation of France, and he had as little desire to give England a strong foothold in the neighbourhood of his own Netherlands as in Wolsey's days. The widening of English territory there could hardly fail to encourage that up-growth of heresy which the Emperor justly looked upon as the greatest danger to the hold of Spain upon the Low Countries, while it would bring Henry a step nearer to the chain of Protestant states which began on the Lower Rhine. The plans which Charles had formed for uniting the Catholics and Lutherans in the conferences of Augsburg had broken down before the opposition both of Luther and the Pope. On both sides indeed the religious contest was gathering new violence. A revival had begun in the Church itself, but it was the revival of a militant and uncompromising orthodoxy. In 1542 the fanaticism of Cardinal Caraffa forced on the establishment of a supreme Tribunal of the Inquisition at Rome. The next year saw the establishment of the Jesuits. Meanwhile Lutheranism took a new energy. The whole north of Germany became Protestant. In 1539 the younger branches of the house of Saxony joined the elder in a common adherence

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to Lutheranism; and their conversion had been followed by that of the Elector of Brandenburg. Southern Germany seemed bent on following the example of the north. The hereditary possessions of Charles himself fell away from Catholicism. The Austrian duchies were overrun with heresy. Bohemia promised soon to become Hussite again. Persecution failed to check the triumph of the new opinions in the Low Countries. The Empire itself threatened to become Protestant. In 1540 the accession of the Elector Palatine robbed Catholicism of Central Germany and the Upper Rhine; and three years later, at the opening of the war with France, that of the Archbishop of Köln gave the Protestants not only the Central Rhineland but a majority in the College of Electors. It seemed impossible for Charles to prevent the Empire from repudiating Catholicism in his lifetime, or to hinder the Imperial Crown from falling to a Protestant at his death.

England
and
France.

The great fabric of power which had been built up by the policy of Ferdinand of Aragon was thus threatened with utter ruin, and Charles saw himself forced into the struggle he had so long avoided, if not for the interests of religion, at any rate for the interests of the House of Austria. He still hoped for a reunion from the Council which was assembling at Trent, and from which a purified Catholicism was to come. But he no longer hoped that the Lutherans would yield to the mere voice of the Council. They would yield only to force, and the first step in such a process of compulsion must be the breaking up of their League of Schmalkald. Only France could save them; and it was to isolate them from France that Charles availed himself of the terror his march on Paris had caused, and concluded a treaty with that power in September 1544. The progress of Protestantism had startled even France itself; and her old policy seemed to be abandoned in her promises of co-operation in the task of repressing heresy in the Empire. But a stronger

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security against French intervention lay in the unscrupulous dexterity with which, while withdrawing from the struggle, Charles left Henry and Francis still at strife. Henry would not cede Boulogne, and Francis saw no means of forcing him to a peace save by a threat of invasion. While an army closed round Boulogne, and a squadron carried troops to Scotland, a hundred and fifty French ships were gathered in the Channel and crossed in the summer of 1545 to the Isle of Wight. But their attacks were feebly conducted and the fleet at last returned to its harbours without striking any serious blow, while the siege of Boulogne dragged idly on through the year. Both kings however drew to peace. In spite of the treaty of Crepy it was impossible for France to abandon the Lutherans, and Francis was eager to free his hands for action across the Rhine. Henry on the other hand, deserted by his ally and with a treasury ruined by the cost of the war, was ready at last to surrender his gains in it. In June 1546 a peace was concluded by which England engaged to surrender Boulogne on payment of a heavy ransom, and France to restore the annual subsidy which had been promised in 1525.

What aided in the close of the war was a new aspect of affairs in Scotland. Since the death of James the Fifth the great foe of England in the north had been the Archbishop of St. Andrews, Cardinal Beaton. In despair of shaking his power his rivals had proposed schemes for his assassination to Henry, and these schemes had been expressly approved. But plot after plot broke down; and it was not till May 1546 that a group of Scotch nobles who favoured the Reformation surprised his castle at St. Andrews. Shrieking miserably, "I am a priest! I am a priest! Fie! Fie! All is gone!" the Cardinal was brutally murdered, and his body hung over the castle-walls. His death made it easy to include Scotland in the peace with France which was concluded in the summer. But in England itself peace was a necessity.

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Peace.

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The Crown was penniless. In spite of the confiscation of the abbey lands in 1539 the treasury was found empty at the very opening of the war: the large subsidies granted by the parliament were expended; and conscious that a fresh grant could hardly be expected even from the servile Houses the government in 1545 fell back on its old resource of benevolences. Of two London merchants who resisted this demand as illegal one was sent to the Fleet, the second ordered to join the army on the Scotch border; but it was significant that resistance had been offered, and the failure of the war-taxes which were voted at the close of the year to supply the royal needs drove the Council to fresh acts of confiscation. A vast mass of Church property still remained for the spoiler, and by a bill of 1545 more than two thousand chauntries and chapels, with a hundred and ten hospitals, were suppressed to the profit of the Crown. Enormous as this booty was, it could only be slowly realized; and the immediate pressure forced the Council to take refuge in the last and worst measure any government can adopt, a debasement of the currency. The evils of such a course were felt till the reign of Elizabeth. But it was a course that could not be repeated; and financial exhaustion played its part in bringing the war to an end.

*Charles
and the
League of
Schmalkald.*

A still greater part was played by the aspect of affairs in the Empire. Once freed from the check of the war Charles had moved fast to his aim. In 1545 he had adjusted all minor differences with Paul the Third, and Pope and Emperor had resolved on the immediate convocation of the Council, and on the enforcement of its decisions by weight of arms. Should the Emperor be driven to war with the Lutheran princes, the Pope engaged to support him with all his power. "Were it needful" Paul promised "he would sell his very crown in his service." In December the Council was actually opened at Trent, and its proceedings soon showed that no concessions to the Lutherans could be looked for. The

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Emperor's demand that the reform of the Church should first be taken in hand was evaded; and on the two great questions of the authority of the Bible as a ground of faith, and of justification, the sentence of the Council directly condemned the Protestant opinions. The Lutherans showed their resolve to make no submission by refusing to send representatives to Trent; and Charles carried out his pledges to the papacy by taking the field in the spring of 1546 to break up the League of Schmalkald. But the army gathered under the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse so far outnumbered the Imperial forces that the Emperor could not venture on a battle. Henry watched the course of Charles with a growing anxiety. The hopes of a purified and united Christendom which had drawn him a few years back to the Emperor's side faded before the stern realities of the Council. The highest pretensions of the Papacy had been sanctioned by the bishops gathered at Trent; and to the pretensions of the Papacy Henry was resolved not to bow. He was driven, whether he would or no, on the policy of Cromwell; and in the last months of his life he offered aid to the League of Schmalkald. His offers were rejected; for the Lutheran princes had no faith in his sincerity, and believed themselves strong enough to deal with the Emperor without foreign help.

But his attitude without told on his policy at home. To the hotter Catholics as to the hotter Protestants the years since Cromwell's fall had seemed years of a gradual return to Catholicism. There had been a slight sharpening of persecution for the Protestants, and restrictions had been put on the reading of the English Bible. The alliance with Charles and the hope of reconciling England anew with a pacified Christendom gave fresh cause for suppressing heresy. Neither Norfolk nor his master indeed desired any rigorous measure of reaction, for Henry remained proud of the work he had done. His bitterness against the Papacy only grew as the years went by; and at the very moment that heretics were suffering

*Effect on
English
religion.*

CHAP. I. for a denial of the mass, others were suffering by their side
 The for a denial of the supremacy. But strange and anomalous
 Protestant as its system seemed, the drift of Henry's religious govern-
 Revolution. ment had as yet been in one direction, that of a return to
 1540- and reconciliation with the body of the Catholic Church.
 1553. With the decision of the Council and the new attitude
 of the Emperor this drift was suddenly arrested. It was
 not that Henry realized the revolution that was opening
 before him or the vast importance of the steps which
 his policy now led him to take. His tendency, like
 that of his people, was religious rather than theological,
 practical rather than speculative. Of the immense prob-
 lems which were opening in the world neither he nor
 England saw anything. The religious strife which was
 to break Europe asunder was to the King as to the bulk
 of Englishmen a quarrel of words and hot temper; the
 truth which Christendom was to rend itself to pieces in
 striving to discover was a thing that could easily be found
 with the aid of God. There is something humorous as
 there is something pathetic in the warnings which Henry
 addressed to the Parliament at the close of 1545. The
 shadow of death as it fell over him gave the King's words
 a new gentleness and tenderness. "The special foundation
 of our religion being charity between man and man, it is
 so refrigerate as there never was more dissension and
 lack of love between man and man, the occasions whereof
 are opinions only and names devised for the continuance
 of the same. Some are called Papists, some Lutherans,
 and some Anabaptists; names devised of the devil, and
 yet not fully without ground, for the severing of one man's
 heart by conceit of opinion from the other." But the
 remedy was a simple one. Every man was "to travail
 first for his own amendment." Then the bishops and clergy
 were to agree in their teaching, "which, seeing there is
 but one truth and verity, they may easily do, calling
 therein for the grace of God." Then the nobles and
 laity were to be pious and humble, to read their new

Bibles "reverently and humbly . . . and in any
 doubt to resort to the learned or at best the higher
 powers." "I am very sorry to know and hear how
 unreverently that precious jewel, the Word of God, is
 disputed, rimed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse and
 tavern. This kind of man is depraved and that kind
 of man, this ceremony and that ceremony." All this con-
 troversy might be done away by simple charity. "There-
 fore be in charity one with another like brother and
 brother. Have respect to the pleasing of God; and then
 I doubt not that love I spoke of shall never be dissolved
 between us."

There is something wonderful in the English coolness
 and narrowness, in the speculative blindness and prac-
 tical good sense which could look out over such a world
 at such a moment, and could see nothing in it save a
 quarrel of "opinions, and of names devised for the
 continuance of the same." But Henry only expressed
 the general feeling of his people. England indeed was
 being slowly leavened with a new spirit. The humiliation
 of the clergy, the Lutheran tendencies of half the
 bishops, the crash of the abbeys, the destruction of
 chauntries and mass-chapels, a measure which told closely
 on the actual worship of the day, the new articles of faith,
 the diffusion of bibles, the "jangling" and discussion which
 followed on every step in the King's course, were all telling
 on the thoughts of men. But the temper of the nation as
 a whole remained religiously conservative. It drifted
 rather to the moderate reforms of the New Learning
 than to any radical reconstruction of the Church. There
 was a general disinclination indeed to push matters to
 either extreme, a general shrinking from the persecution
 which the Catholic called for as from the destruction which
 the Protestant was desiring. It was significant that a new
 heresy bill which passed through the Lords in 1545
 quietly disappeared when it reached the Commons. But
 this shrinking rested rather on national than on theo-

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logical grounds, on a craving for national union which Henry expressed in his cry for "brotherly love," and on an imperfect appreciation of the real nature or consequence of the points at issue which made men shrink from burning their neighbours for "opinions and names devised for the continuance of the same." What Henry and what the bulk of Englishmen wanted was, not indeed wholly to rest in what had been done, but to do little more save the remedying of obvious abuses or the carrying on of obvious improvements. One such improvement was the supplying men with the means of private devotion in their own tongue, a measure from which none but the fanatics of either side dissented. This process went slowly on in the issuing of two primers in 1535 and 1539, the rendering into English of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, the publication of an English Litany for outdoor processions in 1544, and the adding to this of a collection of English prayers in 1545.

The
Court
Factions.

But the very tone of Henry shows his consciousness that this religious truce rested on his will alone. Around him as he lay dying stood men who were girding themselves to a fierce struggle for power, a struggle that could not fail to wake the elements of religious discord which he had striven to lull asleep. Adherents of the Papacy, advocates of a new submission to a foreign spiritual jurisdiction there were few or none; for the most conservative of English Churchmen or nobles had as yet no wish to restore the older Roman supremacy. But Norfolk and Gardiner were content with this assertion of national and ecclesiastical independence; in all matters of faith they were earnest to conserve, to keep things as they were, and in front of them stood a group of nobles who were bent on radical change. The marriages, the reforms, the profusion of Henry had aided him in his policy of weakening the nobles by building up a new nobility which sprang from the Court and was wholly dependent on the Crown. Such were the Russells, the

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Cavendishes, the Wriothesleys, the Fitzwilliams. Such was John Dudley, a son of the Dudley who had been put to death for his financial oppression in Henry the Seventh's days, but who had been restored in blood, attached to the court, raised to the peerage as Lord Lisle, and who, whether as adviser or general, had been actively employed in high stations at the close of this reign. Such above all were the two brothers of Jane Seymour. The elder of the two, Edward Seymour, had been raised to the earldom of Hertford, and entrusted with the command of the English army in its operations against Scotland. As uncle of Henry's boy Edward, he could not fail to play a leading part in the coming reign; and the nobles of the "new blood," as their opponents called them in disdain, drew round him as their head. Without any historical hold on the country, raised by the royal caprice, and enriched by the spoil of the monasteries, these nobles were pledged to the changes from which they had sprung and to the party of change. Over the mass of the nation their influence was small; and in the strife for power with the older nobles which they were anticipating they were forced to look to the small but resolute body of men who, whether from religious enthusiasm or from greed of wealth or power, were bent on bringing the English Church nearer to conformity with the reformed Churches of the Continent. As Henry drew to his grave the two factions faced each other with gathering dread and gathering hate. Hot words betrayed their hopes. "If God should call the King to his mercy," said Norfolk's son, Lord Surrey, "who were so meet to govern the Prince as my lord my father?" "Rather than it should come to pass," retorted a partizan of Hertford's, "that the Prince should be under the governance of your father or you, I would abide the adventure to thrust a dagger in you!"

In the history of English poetry the name of Lord Surrey takes an illustrious place. An Elizabethan writer tells us how at this time "sprang up a new company of

Lord
Surrey.

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courtly makers, of whom Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder and Henry, Earl of Surrey, were the two chieftains; who having travelled to Italy, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poesy, as novices newly crept out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesy from what it had been before, and for that cause may justly be said to be the first reformers of our English metre and style." The dull moralizings of the rimers who followed Chaucer, the rough but vivacious doggerel of Skelton, made way in the hands of Wyatt and Surrey for delicate imitations of the songs, sonnets, and rondels of Italy and France. With the Italian conceits came an Italian refinement whether of words or of thought; and the force and versatility of Surrey's youth showed itself in whimsical satires, in classical translations, in love-sonnets, and in paraphrases of the psalms. In his version of two books of the *Æneid* he was the first to introduce into England the Italian blank verse which was to play so great a part in our literature. But with the poetic taste of the Renaissance Surrey inherited its wild and reckless energy. Once he was sent to the Fleet for challenging a gentleman to fight. Release enabled him to join his father in an expedition against Scotland, but he was no sooner back than the Londoners complained how at Candlemas the young lord and his comrades "went out with stone bows at midnight," and how next day "there was great clamour of the breaking of many glass windows both of houses and churches, and shooting at men that might be in the streets." In spite of his humorous excuse that the jest only purposed to bring home to men that "from justice' rod no fault is free, but that all such as work unright in most quiet are next unrest," Surrey paid for this outbreak with a fresh arrest which drove him to find solace in paraphrases of Ecclesiastes and the Psalms. Soon he was over sea with the English troops in Flanders, and in

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1544 serving as marshal of the camp to conduct the retreat after the siege of Montreuil. Sent to relieve Boulogne, he remained in charge of the town till the spring of 1546, when he returned to England to rime sonnets to a fair Geraldine, the daughter of the Earl of Kildare, and to plunge into the strife of factions around the dying King.

All moral bounds had been loosened by the spirit of the Renaissance, and, if we accept the charge of his rivals, Surrey now aimed at gaining a hold on Henry by offering him his sister as a mistress. It is as possible that the young Earl was aiming simply at the displacement of Catharine Parr, and at the renewal by his sister's elevation to the throne of that matrimonial hold upon Henry which the Howards had already succeeded in gaining through the unions with Anne Boleyn and Catharine Howard. But a temper such as Surrey's was ill-matched against the subtle and unscrupulous schemers who saw their enemy in a pride that scorned the "new men" about him and vowed that when once the King was dead "they should smart for it." The turn of foreign affairs gave a fresh strength to the party which sympathized with the Protestants and denounced that alliance with the Emperor which had been throughout the policy of the Howards. Henry's offer of aid to the Lutheran princes marked the triumph of this party in the royal councils; and the new steps which Cranmer was suffered to make towards an English Liturgy showed that the religious truce of Henry's later years was at last abandoned. Hertford, the head of the "new men," came more to the front as the waning health of the King brought Jane Seymour's boy, Edward, nearer to the throne. In the new reign Hertford, as the boy's uncle, was sure to play a great part; and he used his new influence to remove the only effective obstacle to his future greatness. Surrey's talk of his royal blood, the Duke's quartering of the royal arms to mark his Plantagenet descent, and some secret interviews with the French ambassador, were

*Fall
of the
Howards.*

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*Hertford
made
Protector.*

adroitly used to wake Henry's jealousy of the dangers which might beset the throne of his child. Norfolk and his son were alike committed to the Tower at the close of 1546. A month later Surrey was condemned and sent to the block, and his father was only saved by the sudden death of Henry the Eighth in January, 1547.

By an Act passed in the Parliament of 1544 it had been provided that the crown should pass to Henry's son Edward, and on Edward's death without issue to his sister Mary. Should Mary prove childless it was to go to Elizabeth, the child of Anne Boleyn. Beyond this point the Houses would make no provision, but power was given to the King to make further dispositions by will. At his death it was found that Henry had passed over the line of his sister Margaret of Scotland, and named as next in the succession to Elizabeth the daughters of his younger sister Mary by her marriage with Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. As Edward was but nine years old Henry had appointed a carefully balanced Council of Regency; but the will fell into Hertford's keeping, and when the list of regents was at last disclosed Gardiner, who had till now been the leading minister, was declared to have been excluded from the number of executors. Whether the exclusion was Henry's act or the act of the men who used his name, the absence of the bishop with the imprisonment of Norfolk threw the balance of power on the side of the "new men" who were represented by Hertford and Lisle. Their chief opponent, the Chancellor Wriothesley, struggled in vain against their next step towards supremacy, the modification of Henry's will by the nomination of Hertford as Protector of the realm and governor of Edward's person. Alleged directions from the dying King served as pretexts for the elevation of the whole party to higher rank in the state. It was to repair "the decay of the old English nobility" that Hertford raised himself to the dukedom of Somerset and his brother to the barony of Seymour, the queen's

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brother Lord Parr to the marquisate of Northampton, Lisle to the earldom of Warwick, Russell to that of Bedford, Wriothesley to that of Southampton. Ten of their partizans became barons, and as the number of peers in spite of recent creations still stood at about fifty such a group constituted a power in the Upper House. Alleged directions of the King were conveniently remembered to endow the new peers with public money, though the treasury was beggared and the debt pressing. The expulsion of Wriothesley from the Chancellorship and Council soon left the "new men" without a check; but they were hardly masters of the royal power when a bold stroke of Somerset laid all at his feet. A new patent of Protectorate, drawn out in the boy-King's name, empowered his uncle to act with or without the consent of his fellow executors, and left him supreme in the realm.

Boldly and adroitly as the whole revolution had been managed, it was none the less a revolution. To crush their opponents the Council had first used, and then set aside, Henry's will. Hertford in turn by the use of his nephew's name set aside both the will and the Council. A country gentleman, who had risen by the accident of his sister's queenship to high rank at the Court, had thus by sheer intrigue and self-assertion made himself ruler of the realm. But daring and self-confident as he was, Somerset was forced by his very elevation to seek support for the power he had won by this surprize in measures which marked the retreat of the Monarchy from that position of pure absolutism which it had reached at the close of Henry's reign. The Statute that had given to royal proclamations the force of law was repealed, and several of the new felonies and treasons which Cromwell had created and used with so terrible an effect were erased from the Statute Book. The popularity however which such measures won was too vague a force to serve in the strife of the moment. Against the pressure of the conservative party who had so suddenly found themselves

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and the
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jockeyed out of power Somerset and the "new men" could look for no help but from the Protestants. The hope of their support united with the new Protector's personal predilections in his patronage of the innovations against which Henry had battled to the last. Cranmer had now drifted into a purely Protestant position; and his open break with the older system followed quickly on Seymour's rise to power. "This year," says a contemporary, "the Archbishop of Canterbury did eat meat openly in Lent in the Hall of Lambeth, the like of which was never seen since England was a Christian country." This notable act was followed by a rapid succession of sweeping changes. The legal prohibitions of Lollardy were rescinded; the Six Articles were repealed; a royal injunction removed all pictures and images from the churches. A formal Statute gave priests the right to marry. A resolution of convocation which was confirmed by Parliament brought about the significant change which first definitely marked the severance of the English Church in doctrine from the Roman, by ordering that the sacrament of the altar should be administered in both kinds.

The
Common
Prayer.

A yet more significant change followed. The old tongue of the Church was now to be disused in public worship. The universal use of Latin had marked the Catholic and European character of the older religion; the use of English marked the strictly national and local character of the new system. In the spring of 1548 a new Communion Service in English took the place of the Mass; an English book of Common Prayer, the Liturgy which with slight alterations is still used in the Church of England, soon replaced the Missal and Breviary from which its contents are mainly drawn. The name "Common Prayer," which was given to the new Liturgy, marked its real import. The theory of worship which prevailed through Mediæval Christendom, the belief that the worshipper assisted only at rites wrought for him by priestly hands, at a sacrifice wrought through priestly intervention,

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at the offering of prayer and praise by priestly lips, was now set at naught. "The laity," it has been picturesquely said, "were called up into the Chancel." The act of devotion became a "common prayer" of the whole body of worshippers. The Mass became a "communion" of the whole Christian fellowship. The priest was no longer the offerer of a mysterious sacrifice, the mediator between God and the worshipper; he was set on a level with the rest of the Church, and brought down to be the simple mouthpiece of the congregation.

What gave a wider importance to these measures was their bearing on the general politics of Christendom. The adhesion of England to the Protestant cause came at a moment when Protestantism seemed on the verge of ruin. The confidence of the Lutheran princes in their ability to resist the Emperor had been seen in their refusal of succour from Henry the Eighth. But in the winter of Henry's death the secession of Duke Maurice of Saxony with many of his colleagues from the League of Schmalkald so weakened the Protestant body that Charles was able to put its leaders to the ban of the Empire. Hertford was hardly Protector when the German princes called loudly for aid; but the fifty thousand crowns which were secretly sent by the English Council could scarcely have reached them when in April 1547 Charles surprised their camp at Muhlberg and routed their whole army. The Elector of Saxony was taken prisoner; the Landgrave of Hesse surrendered in despair. His victory left Charles master of the Empire. The jealousy of the Pope indeed at once revived with the Emperor's success, and his recall of the bishops from Trent forced Charles to defer his wider plans for enforcing religious unity; while in Germany itself he was forced to reckon with Duke Maurice and the Protestant princes who had deserted the League of Schmalkald, but whose one object in joining the Emperor had been to provide a check on his after movements. For the moment therefore he was driven to prolong the religious

The
Triumph
of the
Emperor.

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truce by an arrangement called the "Interim." But the Emperor's purpose was now clear. Wherever his power was actually felt the religious reaction began; and the Imperial towns which held firmly to the Lutheran creed were reduced by force of arms. It was of the highest moment that in this hour of despair the Protestants saw their rule suddenly established in a new quarter, and the Lutheranism which was being trampled under foot in its own home triumphant in England. England became the common refuge of the panic-struck Protestants. Bucer and Fagius were sent to lecture at Cambridge, Peter Martyr advocated the anti-sacramentarian views of Calvin at Oxford. Cranmer welcomed refugees from every country, Germans, Italians, French, Poles, and Swiss, to his palace at Lambeth. When persecution broke out in the Low Countries the fugitive Walloons were received at London and Canterbury, and allowed to set up in both places their own churches.

*Pinkie
Cleugh*

But Somerset dreamed of a wider triumph for "the religion." On his death-bed Henry was said to have enforced on the Council the need of carrying out his policy of a union of Scotland with England through the marriage of its Queen with his boy. A wise statesmanship would have suffered the Protestant movement which had been growing stronger in the northern kingdom since Beaton's death to run quietly its course; and his colleagues warned Somerset to leave Scotch affairs untouched till Edward was old enough to undertake them in person. But these counsels were set aside; and a renewal of the border warfare enforced the Protector's demands for a closer union of the kingdoms. The jealousy of France was roused at once, and a French fleet appeared off the Scottish coast to reduce the castle of St. Andrews, which had been held since Beaton's death by the English partizans who murdered him. The challenge called Somerset himself to the field; and crossing the Tweed with a fine army of eighteen thousand men in the

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summer of 1547 the Protector pushed along the coast till he found the Scots encamped behind the Esk on the slopes of Musselburgh, six miles eastward of Edinburgh. The English invasion had drawn all the factions of the kingdom together against the stranger, and a body of "Gospellers" under Lord Angus formed the advance-guard of the Scotch army as it moved by its right on the tenth of September to turn the English position and drive Somerset into the sea. The English horse charged the Scottish front only to be flung off by its pikemen; but their triumph threw the Lowlanders into disorder, and as they pushed forward in pursuit their advance was roughly checked by the fire of a body of Italian musketeers whom Somerset had brought with him. The check was turned into a defeat by a general charge of the English line, a fatal panic broke the Scottish host, and ten thousand men fell in its headlong flight beneath the English lances.

Victor as he was at Pinkie Cleugh, Somerset was soon forced by famine to fall back from the wasted country. His victory indeed had been more fatal to the interests of England than a defeat. The Scots in despair turned as of old to France, and bought its protection by consenting to the child-queen's marriage with the son of Henry the Second, who had followed Francis on the throne. In the summer of 1548 Mary Stuart sailed under the escort of a French fleet and landed safely at Brest. Not only was the Tudor policy of union foiled, as it seemed, for ever, but Scotland was henceforth to be a part of the French realm. To north as to south England would feel the pressure of the French King. Nor was Somerset's policy more successful at home. The religious changes he was forcing on the land were carried through with the despotism, if not with the vigour, of Cromwell. In his acceptance of the personal supremacy of the sovereign, Gardiner was ready to bow to every change which Henry had ordered, or which his son, when of age to be fully King, might order in the days to come.

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Policy*

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But he denounced all ecclesiastical changes made during the King's minority as illegal and invalid. Untenable as it was, this protest probably represented the general mind of Englishmen; but the bishop was committed by Council to prison in the Fleet, and though soon released was sent by the Protector to the Tower. The power of preaching was restricted by the issue of licences only to the friends of the Primate. While all counter arguments were rigidly suppressed, a crowd of Protestant pamphleteers flooded the country with vehement invectives against the Mass and its superstitious accompaniments. The suppression of chauntries and religious gilds which was now being carried out enabled Somerset to buy the assent of noble and landowner to his measures by glutting their greed with the last spoils of the Church.

The
Revolts.

But it was impossible to buy off the general aversion of the people to the Protector's measures; and German and Italian mercenaries had to be introduced to stamp out the popular discontent which broke out in the east, in the west, and in the midland counties. Everywhere men protested against the new changes and called for the maintenance of the system of Henry the Eighth. The Cornishmen refused to receive the new service "because it is like a Christmas game." In 1549 Devonshire demanded by open revolt the restoration of the Mass and the Six Articles as well as a partial re-establishment of the suppressed abbeys. The agrarian discontent woke again in the general disorder. Enclosures and evictions were going steadily on, and the bitterness of the change was being heightened by the results of the dissolution of the abbeys. Church lands had always been underlet, the monks were easy landlords, and on no estates had the peasantry been as yet so much exempt from the general revolution in culture. But the new lay masters to whom the abbey lands fell were quick to reap their full value by a rise of rents and by the same processes of eviction and enclosure as went on elsewhere. The distress was

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deepened by the change in the value of money which was now beginning to be felt from the mass of gold and silver which the New World was yielding to the Old, and still more by a general rise of prices that followed on the debasement of the coinage which had begun with Henry and went on yet more unscrupulously under Somerset. The trouble came at last to a head in the manufacturing districts of the eastern counties. Twenty thousand men gathered round an "oak of Reformation" near Norwich, and repulsing the royal troops in a desperate engagement renewed the old cries for a removal of evil counsellors, a prohibition of enclosures, and redress for the grievances of the poor.

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Fall.

The revolt of the Norfolk men was stamped out in blood by the energy of Lord Warwick, as the revolt in the west had been put down by Lord Russell, but the risings had given a fatal blow to Somerset's power. It had already been weakened by strife within his own family. His brother Thomas had been created Lord Seymour and raised to the post of Lord High Admiral; but glutted as he was with lands and honours, his envy at Somerset's fortunes broke out in a secret marriage with the Queen-dowager, Catharine Parr, in an attempt on her death to marry Elizabeth, and in intrigues to win the confidence of the young King and detach him from his brother. Seymour's discontent was mounting into open revolt when in the January of 1549 he was arrested, refused a trial, attainted, and sent to the block. The stain of a brother's blood, however justly shed, rested from that hour on Somerset, while the nobles were estranged from him by his resolve to enforce the laws against enclosures and evictions, as well as by the weakness he had shown in the presence of the revolt. Able indeed as Somerset was, his temper was not that of a ruler of men; and his miserable administration had all but brought government to a standstill. While he was dreaming of a fresh invasion of Scotland the treasury was empty, not a servant of the state was paid, and the soldiers he had

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engaged on the Continent refused to cross the Channel in despair of receiving their hire. It was only by loans raised at ruinous interest that the Protector escaped sheer bankruptcy when the revolts in east and west came to swell the royal expenses. His weakness in tampering with the popular demands completed his ruin. The nobles dreaded a communistic outbreak like that of the Suabian peasantry, and their dread was justified by prophecies that monarchy and nobility were alike to be destroyed and a new rule set up under governors elected by the people. They dreaded yet more the being forced to disgorge their spoil to appease the discontent. At the close of 1549 therefore the Council withdrew openly from Somerset, and forced the Protector to resign.

Warwick's
Protectorate.

His office passed to the Earl of Warwick, to whose ruthless severity the suppression of the revolt was mainly due. The change of governors however brought about no change of system. Peace indeed was won from France by the immediate surrender of Boulogne; but the misgovernment remained as great as ever, the currency was yet further debased, and a wild attempt made to remedy the effects of this measure by a royal fixing of prices. It was in vain that Latimer denounced the prevailing greed, and bade the Protestant lords choose "either restitution or else damnation." Their sole aim seemed to be that of building up their own fortunes at the cost of the state. All pretence of winning popular sympathy was gone, and the rule of the upstart nobles who formed the Council of Regency became simply a rule of terror. "The greater part of the people," one of their creatures, Cecil, avowed, "is not in favour of defending this cause, but of aiding its adversaries; on that side are the greater part of the nobles, who absent themselves from Court, all the bishops save three or four, almost all the judges and lawyers, almost all the justices of the peace, the priests who can move their flocks any way, for the whole of the commonalty is in such a state of irritation that it will easily

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tion.

follow any stir towards change." But united as it was in its opposition the nation was helpless. The system of despotism which Cromwell built up had been seized by a knot of adventurers, and with German and Italian mercenaries at their disposal they rode roughshod over the land.

At such a moment it seemed madness to provoke foes abroad as well as at home, but the fanaticism of the young King was resolved to force on his sister Mary a compliance with the new changes, and her resistance was soon backed by the remonstrances of her cousin, the Emperor. Charles was now at the height of his power, master of Germany, preparing to make the Empire hereditary in the person of his son, Philip, and preluding a wider effort to suppress heresy throughout the world by the establishment of the Inquisition in the Netherlands and a fiery persecution which drove thousands of Walloon heretics to find a refuge in England. But heedless of dangers from without or of dangers from within Cranmer and his colleagues advanced more boldly than ever in the career of innovation. Four prelates who adhered to the older system were deprived of their sees and committed on frivolous pretexts to the Tower. A new Catechism embodied the doctrines of the reformers, and a book of Homilies which enforced the chief Protestant tenets was ordered to be read in Churches. A crowning defiance was given to the doctrine of the Mass by an order to demolish the stone altars and replace them by wooden tables, which were stationed for the most part in the middle of the church. In 1552 a revised Prayer-book was issued, and every change made in it leaned directly towards the extreme Protestantism which was at this time finding a home at Geneva. On the cardinal point of difference, the question of the sacrament, the new formularies broke away not only from the doctrine of Rome but from that of Luther, and embodied the anti-sacramentarian tenets of Zuingli and Calvin. Forty-two Articles of Religion were introduced; and though since reduced by omissions to thirty-nine these have remained to this day

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the formal standard of doctrine in the English Church. Like the Prayer-book, they were mainly the work of Cranmer; and belonging as they did to the class of Confessions which were now being framed in Germany to be presented to the Council of Christendom which Charles was still resolute to re-assemble, they marked the adhesion of England to the Protestant movement on the Continent. Even the episcopal mode of government which still connected the English Church with the old Catholic Communion was reduced to a form; in Cranmer's mind the spiritual powers of the bishops were drawn simply from the King's commission as their temporal jurisdiction was exercised in the King's name. They were reduced therefore to the position of royal officers, and called to hold their offices simply at the royal pleasure. The sufferings of the Protestants had failed to teach them the worth of religious liberty; and a new code of ecclesiastical laws, which was ordered to be drawn up by a board of Commissioners as a substitute for the Canon Law of the Catholic Church, although it shrank from the penalty of death, attached that of perpetual imprisonment or exile to the crimes of heresy, blasphemy, and adultery, and declared excommunication to involve a severance of the offender from the mercy of God and his deliverance into the tyranny of the devil. Delays in the completion of this Code prevented its legal establishment during Edward's reign; but the use of the new Liturgy and attendance at the new service was enforced by imprisonment, and subscription to the Articles of Faith was demanded by royal authority from all clergymen, churchwardens, and schoolmasters.

The
Religious
Disorder

The distaste for changes so hurried and so rigorously enforced was increased by the daring speculations of the more extreme Protestants. The real value of the religious revolution of the sixteenth century to mankind lay, not in its substitution of one creed for another, but in the new spirit of enquiry, the new freedom of thought and of discussion, which was awakened during the process of change.

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But however familiar such a truth may be to us, it was absolutely hidden from the England of the time. Men heard with horror that the foundations of faith and morality were questioned, polygamy advocated, oaths denounced as unlawful, community of goods raised into a sacred obligation, the very Godhead of the Founder of Christianity denied. The repeal of the Statute of Heresy left indeed the powers of the Common Law intact, and Cranmer availed himself of these to send heretics of the last class without mercy to the stake. But within the Church itself the Primate's desire for uniformity was roughly resisted by the more ardent members of his own party. Hooper, who had been named Bishop of Gloucester, refused to wear the episcopal habits, and denounced them as the livery of the "harlot of Babylon," a name for the Papacy which was supposed to have been discovered in the Apocalypse. Ecclesiastical order came almost to an end. Priests flung aside the surplice as superstitious. Patrons of livings presented their huntsmen or gamekeepers to the benefices in their gift, and kept the stipend. All teaching of divinity ceased at the Universities: the students indeed had fallen off in numbers, the libraries were in part scattered or burned, the intellectual impulse of the New Learning died away. One noble measure indeed, the foundation of eighteen Grammar Schools, was destined to throw a lustre over the name of Edward, but it had no time to bear fruit in his reign.

While the reckless energy of the reformers brought England to the verge of chaos, it brought Ireland to the brink of rebellion. The fall of Cromwell had been followed by a long respite in the religious changes which he was forcing on the conquered dependency; but with the accession of Edward the Sixth the system of change was renewed with all the energy of Protestant zeal. In 1551 the bishops were summoned before the deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger, to receive the new English Liturgy which, though written in a tongue as strange to the native

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The Peace of Passau. Oversea indeed the perils of the new government passed suddenly away. Charles had backed Mary's resistance with threats, and as he moved forward to that mastery of

the world to which he confidently looked his threats might any day become serious dangers. But the peace with England had set the French government free to act in Germany, and it found allies in the great middle party of princes whose secession from the League of Schmalkald had seemed to bring ruin to the Protestant cause. The aim of Duke Maurice in bringing them to desert the League had been to tie the Emperor's hands by the very fact of their joining him, and for a while this policy had been successful. But the death of Paul the Third, whose jealousy had till now foiled the Emperor's plans, and the accession of an Imperial nominee to the Papal throne, enabled Charles to move more boldly to his ends, and at the close of 1551 a fresh assembly of the Council at Trent, and an Imperial summons of the Lutheran powers to send divines to its sessions and to submit to its decisions, brought matters to an issue. Maurice was forced to accept the aid of the stranger and to conclude a secret treaty with France. He was engaged as a general of Charles in the siege of Magdeburg; but in the spring of 1552 the army he had then at command was suddenly marched to the south, and through the passes of the Tyrol the Duke moved straight on the Imperial camp at Innsbruck. Charles was forced to flee for very life while the Council at Trent broke hastily up, and in a few months the whole Imperial design was in ruin. Henry the Second was already moving on the Rhine; to meet the French King Charles was forced to come to terms with the Lutheran princes; and his signature in the summer of a Treaty at Passau secured to their states the free exercise of the reformed religion and gave the Protestant princes their due weight in the tribunals of the empire.

The humiliation of the Emperor, the fierce warfare which now engaged both his forces and those of France, removed from England the danger of outer interference. But within the misrule went recklessly on. All that men saw was a religious and political chaos, in which ecclesiastical order had perished and in which politics were dying down into the

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squabbles of a knot of nobles over the spoils of the Church and the Crown. Not content with Somerset's degradation, the Council charged him in 1551 with treason, and sent him to the block. Honours and lands were lavished as ever on themselves and their adherents. Warwick became Duke of Northumberland, Lord Dorset was made Duke of Suffolk, Paulet rose to the Marquisate of Winchester, Sir William Herbert was created Earl of Pembroke. The plunder of the chauntries and the gilds failed to glut the appetite of this crew of spoilers. Half the lands of every see were flung to them in vain; an attempt was made to satisfy their greed by a suppression of the wealthy see of Durham; and the whole endowments of the Church were threatened with confiscation. But while the courtiers gorged themselves with manors, the Treasury grew poorer. The coinage was again debased. Crown lands to the value of five millions of our modern money had been granted away to the friends of Somerset and Warwick. The royal expenditure mounted in seventeen years to more than four times its previous total. In spite of the brutality and bloodshed with which revolt had been suppressed, and of the foreign soldiery on whom the Council relied, there were signs of resistance which would have made less reckless statesmen pause. The temper of the Parliament had drifted far from the slavish subservience which it showed at the close of Henry's reign. The House of Commons met Northumberland's project for the pillage of the bishoprick of Durham with opposition, and rejected a new treason bill. In 1552 the Duke was compelled to force nominees of his own on the constituencies by writs from the Council before he could count on a house to his mind. Such writs had been often issued since the days of Henry the Seventh; but the ministers of Edward were driven to an expedient which shows how rapidly the temper of independence was growing. The summons of new members from places hitherto unrepresented was among the prerogatives of the Crown, and the Protectorate used this

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power to issue writs to small villages in the west which could be trusted to return members to its mind.

This "packing of Parliament" was to be largely extended in the following reigns; but it passed as yet with little comment. What really kept England quiet was a trust that the young King, who would be of age in two or three years, would then set all things right again. "When he comes of age," said a Hampshire squire, "he will see another rule, and hang up a hundred heretic knaves." Edward's temper was as lordly as that of his father, and had he once really reigned he would probably have dealt as roughly with the plunderers who had used his name as England hoped. But he was a fanatical Protestant, and his rule would almost certainly have forced on a religious strife as bitter and disastrous as the strife which broke the strength of Germany and France. From this calamity the country was saved by his waning health. Edward was now fifteen, but in the opening of 1553 the signs of coming death became too clear for Northumberland and his fellows to mistake them. By the Statute of the Succession the death of the young King would bring Mary to the throne; and as Mary was known to have refused acceptance of all changes in her father's system, and was looked on as anxious only to restore it, her accession became a subject of national hope. But to Northumberland and his fellows her succession was fatal. They had personally outraged Mary by their attempts to force her into compliance with their system. Her first act would be to free Norfolk and the bishops whom they held prisoners in the Tower, and to set these bitter enemies in power. With ruin before them the Protestant lords were ready for a fresh revolution; and the bigotry of the young King fell in with their plans.

In his zeal for "the religion," and in his absolute faith in his royal autocracy, Edward was ready to override will and statute and to set Mary's rights aside. In such a case the crown fell legally to Elizabeth,

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the daughter of Anne Boleyn, who had been placed by the Act next in succession to Mary, and whose training under Catharine Parr and the Seymours gave good hopes of her Protestant sympathies. The cause of Elizabeth would have united the whole of the "new men" in its defence, and might have proved a formidable difficulty in Mary's way. But for the maintenance of his personal power Northumberland could as little count on Elizabeth as on Mary; and in Edward's death the Duke saw a chance of raising, if not himself, at any rate his own blood to the throne. He persuaded the young King that he possessed as great a right as his father to settle the succession of the Crown by will. Henry had passed by the children of his sister Margaret of Scotland, and had placed next to Elizabeth in the succession the children of his younger sister Mary, the wife of Charles Brandon, the Duke of Suffolk. Frances, Mary's child by this marriage, was still living, the mother of three daughters by her marriage with Grey, Lord Dorset, a hot partizan of the religious changes, who had been raised under the Protectorate to the Dukedom of Suffolk. Frances was a woman of thirty-seven; but her accession to the Crown squared as little with Northumberland's plans as that of Mary or Elizabeth. In the will therefore which the young King drew up Edward was brought to pass over Frances, and to name as his successor her eldest daughter, the Lady Jane Grey. The marriage of Jane Grey with Guildford Dudley, the fourth son of Northumberland, was all that was needed to complete the unscrupulous plot. It was the celebration of this marriage in May which first woke a public suspicion of the existence of such designs, and the general murmur which followed on the suspicion might have warned the Duke of his danger. But the secret was closely kept, and it was only in June that Edward's "plan" was laid in the same strict secrecy before Northumberland's colleagues. A project which raised the Duke into a virtual sovereignty over the realm could hardly fail to stir resistance in the

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the Council. The King however was resolute, and his will was used to set aside all scruples. The judges who represented that letters patent could not override a positive statute were forced into signing their assent by Edward's express command. To their signatures were added those of the whole Council with Cranmer at its head. The primate indeed remonstrated, but his remonstrances proved as fruitless as those of his fellow councillors.

The deed was hardly done when on the sixth of July the young King passed away. Northumberland felt little anxiety about the success of his design. He had won over Lord Hastings to his support by giving him his daughter in marriage, and had secured the help of Lord Pembroke by wedding Jane's sister, Catharine, to his son. The army, the fortresses, the foreign soldiers, were at his command; the hotter Protestants were with him; France, in dread of Mary's kinship with the Emperor, offered support to his plans. Jane therefore was at once proclaimed Queen on Edward's death, and accepted as their sovereign by the Lords of the Council. But the temper of the whole people rebelled against so lawless a usurpation. The eastern counties rose as one man to support Mary; and when Northumberland marched from London with ten thousand at his back to crush the rising, the Londoners, Protestant as they were, showed their ill-will by a stubborn silence. "The people crowd to look upon us," the Duke noted gloomily, "but not one calls 'God speed ye.'" While he halted for reinforcements his own colleagues struck him down. Eager to throw from their necks the yoke of a rival who had made himself a master, the Council no sooner saw the popular reaction than they proclaimed Mary Queen; and this step was at once followed by a declaration of the fleet in her favour, and by the announcement of the levies in every shire that they would only fight in her cause. As the tidings reached him the Duke's courage suddenly gave way. His retreat to Cambridge was the signal for a general defection. Northumberland himself threw his

*Fall of
Northum-
berland.*

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 But his submission failed to avert his doom ; and the death
 of the Duke drew with it the imprisonment in the Tower
 of the hapless girl whom he had made the tool of his
 ambition.

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CHAPTER II.

THE CATHOLIC REACTION.

1553—1558.

THE triumph of Mary was a fatal blow at the system of despotism which Henry the Eighth had established. It was a system that rested not so much on the actual strength possessed by the Crown as on the absence of any effective forces of resistance. At Henry's death the one force of opposition which had developed itself was that of the Protestants, but whether in numbers or political weight the Protestants were as yet of small consequence, and their resistance did little to break the general drift of both nation and King. For great as were the changes which Henry had wrought in the severance of England from the Papacy and the establishment of the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown, they were wrought with fair assent from the people at large ; and when once the discontent roused by Cromwell's violence had been appeased by his fall England as a whole acquiesced in the conservative system of the King. This national union however was broken by the Protectorate. At the moment when it had reached its height the royal authority was seized by a knot of nobles and recklessly used to further the revolutionary projects of a small minority of the people. From the hour of this revolution a new impulse was given to resistance. The older nobility, the bulk of the gentry, the wealthier merchants, the great mass of the people, found themselves thrown by the very instinct of conservatism into opposition to

*Mary
 and the
 Monarchy.*

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religious
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the Crown. It was only by foreign hirelings that revolt was suppressed; it was only by a reckless abuse of the system of packing the Houses that Parliament could be held in check. At last the Government ventured on an open defiance of law; and a statute of the realm was set aside at the imperious bidding of a boy of fifteen. Master of the royal forces, wielding at his will the royal authority, Northumberland used the voice of the dying Edward to set aside rights of succession as sacred as his own. But the attempt proved an utter failure. The very forces on which the Duke relied turned against him. The whole nation fronted him in arms. The sovereign whom the voice of the young King named as his successor passed from the throne to the Tower, and a sovereign whose title rested on parliamentary statute took her place.

At the opening of August Mary entered London in triumph. Short and thin in figure, with a face drawn and colourless that told of constant ill-health, there was little in the outer seeming of the new queen to recall her father; but her hard, bright eyes, her manlike voice, her fearlessness and self-will, told of her Tudor blood, as her skill in music, her knowledge of languages, her love of learning, spoke of the culture and refinement of Henry's Court. Though Mary was thirty-seven years old, the strict retirement in which she had lived had left her as ignorant of the actual temper of England as England was ignorant of her own. She had founded her resistance to the changes of the Protectorate on a resolve to adhere to her father's system till her brother came of age to rule, and England believed her to be longing like itself simply for a restoration of what Henry had left. The belief was confirmed by her earlier actions. The changes of the Protectorate were treated as null and void. Gardiner, Henry's minister, was drawn from the Tower to take the lead as Chancellor at the Queen's Council-board. Bonner and the deposed bishops were restored to their sees. Ridley with the others who had displaced them were again expelled.

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Latimer, as a representative of the extreme Protestants, was sent to the Tower; and the foreign refugees, as anti-sacramentarians, were ordered to leave England. On an indignant protest from Cranmer against reports that he was ready to abandon the new reforms the Archbishop was sent for his seditious demeanour to the Tower, and soon put on his trial for treason with Lady Jane Grey, her husband, and two of his brothers. Each pleaded guilty; but no attempt was made to carry out the sentence of death. In all this England went with the Queen. The popular enthusiasm hardly waited in fact for the orders of the Government. The whole system which had been pursued during Edward's reign fell with a sudden crash. London indeed retained much of its Protestant sympathy, but over the rest of the country the tide of reaction swept without a check. The married priests were driven from their churches, the images were replaced. In many parishes the new Prayer-book was set aside and the mass restored. The Parliament which met in October annulled the laws made respecting religion during the past reign, and re-established the form of service as used in the last year of Henry the Eighth.

Up to this point the temper of England went fairly with that of the Queen. But there were from the first signs of a radical difference between the aim of Mary and that of her people. With the restoration of her father's system the nation as a whole was satisfied. Mary on the other hand looked on such a restoration simply as a step towards a complete revival of the system which Henry had done away. Through long years of suffering and peril her fanaticism had been patiently brooding over the hope of restoring to England its older religion. She believed, as she said at a later time to the Parliament, that "she had been predestined and preserved by God to the succession of the Crown for no other end save that He might make use of her above all else in the bringing back of the realm to the Catholic faith." Her zeal however was checked by the fact that she stood almost alone in her aim, as well as

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by cautious advice from her cousin, the Emperor; and she assured the Londoners that "albeit her own conscience was stayed in matters of religion, yet she meant not to compel or strain men's consciences otherwise than God should, as she trusted, put in their hearts a persuasion of the truth that she was in, through the opening of his word unto them by godly, and virtuous, and learned preachers." She had in fact not ventured as yet to refuse the title of "Head of the Church next under God" or to disclaim the powers which the Act of Supremacy gave her; on the contrary she used these powers in the regulation of preaching as her father had used them. The strenuous resistance with which her proposal to set aside the new Prayer Book was met in Parliament warned her of the difficulties that awaited any projects of radical change. The proposal was carried, but only after a hot conflict which lasted over six days and which left a third of the Lower House still opposed to it. Their opposition by no means implied approval of the whole series of religious changes of which the Prayer Book formed a part, for the more moderate Catholics were pleading at this time for prayers in the vulgar tongue, and on this question followers of More and Colet might have voted with the followers of Cranmer. But it showed how far men's minds were from any spirit of blind reaction or blind compliance with the royal will.

The
Spanish
Marriage.

The temper of the Parliament indeed was very different from that of the Houses which had knelt before Henry the Eighth. If it consented to repeal the enactment which rendered her mother's marriage invalid and to declare Mary "born in lawful matrimony," it secured the abolition of all the new treasons and felonies created in the two last reigns. The demand for their abolition showed that jealousy of the growth of civil tyranny had now spread from the minds of philosophers like More to the minds of common Englishmen. Still keener was the jealousy of any marked revolution in the religious system which Henry had established. The wish to return to the obedience of

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Rome lingered indeed among some of the clergy and in the northern shires. But elsewhere the system of a national Church was popular, and it was backed by the existence of a large and influential class who had been enriched by the abbey lands. Forty thousand families had profited by the spoil, and watched anxiously any approach of danger to their new possessions, such as submission to the Papacy was likely to bring about. On such a submission however Mary was resolved: and it was to gain strength for such a step that she determined to seek a husband from her mother's house. The policy of Ferdinand of Aragon, so long held at bay by adverse fortune, was now to find its complete fulfilment. To one line of the house of Austria, that of Charles the Fifth, had fallen not only the Imperial Crown but the great heritage of Burgundy, Aragon, Naples, Castile, and the Castilian dependencies in the New World. To a second, that of the Emperor's brother Ferdinand, had fallen the Austrian duchies, Bohemia and Hungary. The marriage of Catharine was now, as it seemed, to bear its fruits by the union of Mary with a son of Charles, and the placing a third Austrian line upon the throne of England. The gigantic scheme of bringing all western Europe together under the rule of a single family seemed at last to draw to its realization.

It was no doubt from political as well as religious motives that Mary set her heart on this union. Her rejection of Gardiner's proposal that she should marry the young Courtenay, Earl of Devon, a son of the Marquis of Exeter whom Henry had beheaded, the resolve which she expressed to wed "no subject, no Englishman," was founded in part on the danger to her throne from the pretensions of Mary Stuart, whose adherents cared little for the exclusion of the Scotch line from the succession by Henry's will and already alleged the illegitimate births of both Mary Tudor and Elizabeth through the annulling of their mothers' marriages as a ground for denying their right to the throne. Such claims became doubly formidable through the marriage

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of Mary Stuart with the heir of the French Crown, and the virtual union of both Scotland and France in this claimant's hands. It was only to Charles that the Queen could look for aid against such a pressure as this, and Charles was forced to give her aid. His old dreams of a mastery of the world had faded away before the stern realities of the Peace of Passau and his repulse from the walls of Metz. His hold over the Empire was broken. France was more formidable than ever. To crown his difficulties the growth of heresy and of the spirit of independence in the Netherlands threatened to rob him of the finest part of the Burgundian heritage. With Mary Stuart once on the English throne, and the great island of the west knit to the French monarchy, the balance of power would be utterly overthrown, the Low Countries lost, and the Imperial Crown, as it could hardly be doubted, reft from the house of Austria. He was quick therefore to welcome the Queen's advances, and to offer his son Philip, who though not yet thirty had been twice a widower, as a candidate for her hand.

Opposition
of
Parliament.

The offer came weighted with a heavy bribe. The keen foresight of the Emperor already saw the difficulty of holding the Netherlands in union with the Spanish monarchy; and while Spain, Naples, and Franche Comté descended to Philip's eldest son, Charles promised the heritage of the Low Countries with England to the issue of Philip and Mary. He accepted too the demand of Gardiner and the Council that in the event of such a union England should preserve complete independence both of policy and action. In any case the marriage would save England from the grasp of France, and restore it, as the Emperor hinted, to the obedience of the Church. But the project was hardly declared when it was met by an outburst of popular indignation. Gardiner himself was against a union that would annul the national independence which had till now been the aim of Tudor policy, and that would drag England helplessly in the wake of the House

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of Austria. The mass of conservative Englishmen shrank from the religious aspects of the marriage. For the Emperor had now ceased to be an object of hope or confidence as a mediator who would at once purify the Church from abuses, and restore the unity of Christendom; he had ranged himself definitely on the side of the Papacy and of the Council of Trent; and the cruelties of the Inquisition which he had introduced into Flanders gave a terrible indication of the bigotry which he was to bequeath to his House. The marriage with Philip meant, it could hardly be doubted, a submission to the Papacy, and an undoing not only of the religious changes of Edward but of the whole system of Henry. Loyal and conservative as was the temper of the Parliament, it was at one in its opposition to a Spanish marriage and in the request which it made through a deputation of its members to the Queen that she would marry an Englishman. The request was a new step forward on the part of the Houses to the recovery of their older rights. Already called by Cromwell's policy to more than their old power in ecclesiastical matters, their dread of revolutionary change pushed them to an intervention in matters of state. Mary noted the advance with all a Tudor's jealousy. She interrupted the speaker; she rebuked the Parliament for taking too much on itself; she declared she would take counsel on such a matter "with God and with none other." But the remonstrance had been made, the interference was to serve as a precedent in the reign to come, and a fresh proof had been given that Parliament was no longer the slavish tool of the Crown.

But while the nation grumbled and the Parliament remonstrated, one party in the realm was filled with absolute panic by the news of the Spanish match. The Protestants saw in the marriage not only the final overthrow of their religious hopes, but a close of the religious truce, and an opening of persecution. The general opposition to the match, with the dread of the holders of Church

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lands that their possessions were in danger, encouraged the more violent to plan a rising; and France, naturally jealous of an increase of power by its great opponent, promised to support them by an incursion from Scotland and an attack on Calais. The real aim of the rebellion was, no doubt, the displacement of Mary, and the setting either of Jane Grey, or, as the bulk of the Protestants desired, of Elizabeth, on the throne. But these hopes were cautiously hidden; and the conspirators declared their aim to be that of freeing the Queen from evil counsellors, and of preventing her union with the Prince of Spain. The plan combined three simultaneous outbreaks of revolt. Sir Peter Carew engaged to raise the west, the Duke of Suffolk to call the midland counties to arms, while Sir Thomas Wyatt led the Kentishmen on London. The rising was planned for the spring of 1554. But the vigilance of the Government drove it to a premature explosion in January, and baffled it in the centre and the west. Carew fled to France; Suffolk, who appeared in arms at Leicester, found small response from the people, and was soon sent prisoner to the Tower. The Kentish rising however proved a more formidable danger. A cry that the Spaniards were coming "to conquer the realm" drew thousands to Wyatt's standard. The ships in the Thames submitted to be seized by the insurgents. A party of the train-bands of London, who marched with the royal guard under the old Duke of Norfolk against them, deserted to the rebels in a mass with shouts of "A Wyatt! a Wyatt! we are all Englishmen!"

*Its
failure.*

Had the Kentishmen moved quickly on the capital, its gates would have been flung open and success would have been assured. But at the critical moment Mary was saved by her queenly courage. Riding boldly to the Guildhall she appealed with "a man's voice" to the loyalty of the citizens, and denounced the declaration of Wyatt's followers as "a Spanish cloak to cover their purpose against our religion." She pledged herself, "on the word of a Queen, that if it

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shall not probably appear to all the nobility and commons in the high court of Parliament that this marriage shall be for the high benefit and commodity of all the whole realm, then will I abstain from marriage while I live." The pledge was a momentous one, for it owned the very claim of the two Houses which the Queen had till now haughtily rejected; and with the remonstrance of the Parliament still fresh in their ears the Londoners may well have believed that the marriage-project would come quietly to an end. The dread too of any change in religion by the return of the violent Protestantism of Edward's day could hardly fail to win Mary support among the citizens. The mayor answered for their loyalty, and when Wyatt appeared on the Southwark bank the bridge was secured against him. But the rebel leader knew that the issue of the revolt hung on the question which side London would take, and that a large part of the Londoners favoured his cause. Marching therefore up the Thames he seized a bridge at Kingston, threw his force across the river, and turned rapidly back on the capital. But a night march along miry roads wearied and disorganized his men; the bulk of them were cut off from their leader by a royal force which had gathered in the fields at what is now Hyde Park Corner, and only Wyatt himself with a handful of followers pushed desperately on past the palace of St. James, whence the Queen refused to fly even while the rebels were marching beneath its walls, along the Strand to Ludgate. "I have kept touch," he cried as he sank exhausted at the gate. But it was closed: his adherents within were powerless to effect their promised diversion in his favour; and as he fell back the daring leader was surrounded at Temple Bar and sent to the Tower.

The failure of the revolt was fatal to the girl whom part at least of the rebels would have placed on the throne. Lady Jane Grey, who had till now been spared and treated with great leniency, was sent to the block; and her father,

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her husband, and her uncle, atoned for the ambition of the House of Suffolk by the death of traitors. Wyatt and his chief adherents followed them to execution, while the bodies of the poorer insurgents were dangling on gibbets round London. Elizabeth, who had with some reason been suspected of complicity in the insurrection, was sent to the Tower; and only saved from death by the interposition of the Council. The leading Protestants fled in terror over sea. But the failure of the revolt did more than crush the Protestant party; it enabled the Queen to lay aside the mask of moderation which had been forced on her by the earlier difficulties of her reign. An order for the expulsion of all married clergy from their cures, with the deprivation of nine bishops who had been appointed during the Protectorate and who represented its religious tendencies, proved the Queen's resolve to enter boldly on a course of reaction. Her victory secured the Spanish marriage. It was to prevent Philip's union to Mary that Wyatt had risen, and with his overthrow the Queen's policy stood triumphant. The whole strength of the conservative opposition was lost when opposition could be branded as disloyalty. Mary too was true to the pledge she had given that the match should only be brought about with the assent of Parliament. But pressure was unscrupulously used to secure compliant members in the new elections, and a reluctant assent to the marriage was wrung from the Houses when they assembled in the spring. Philip was created king of Naples by his father to give dignity to his union; and in the following July Mary met him at Winchester and became his wife.

Philip.

As he entered London with the Queen, men noted curiously the look of the young King whose fortunes were to be so closely linked with those of England for fifty years to come. Far younger than his bride, for he was but twenty-six, there was little of youth in the small and fragile frame, the sickly face, the sedentary habits,

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the Spanish silence and reserve, which estranged Englishmen from Philip as they had already estranged his subjects in Italy and his future subjects in the Netherlands. Here however he sought by an unusual pleasantness of demeanour as well as by profuse distributions of gifts to win the national good will, for it was only by winning it that he could accomplish the work he came to do. His first aim was to reconcile England with the Church. The new Spanish marriage was to repair the harm which the earlier Spanish marriage had brought about by securing that submission to Rome on which Mary was resolved. Even before Philip's landing in England the great obstacle to reunion had been removed by the consent of Julius the Third under pressure from the Emperor to waive the restoration of the Church-lands in the event of England's return to obedience. Other and almost as great obstacles indeed seemed to remain. The temper of the nation had gone with Henry in his rejection of the Papal jurisdiction. Mary's counsellors had been foremost among the men who advocated the change. Her minister, Bishop Gardiner, seemed pledged to oppose any submission to Rome. As secretary of state after Wolsey's fall he had taken a prominent part in the measures which brought about a severance between England and the Papacy; as Bishop of Winchester he had written a famous tract "On True Obedience" in which the Papal supremacy had been expressly repudiated; and to the end of Henry's days he had been looked upon as the leading advocate of the system of a national and independent Church. Nor had his attitude changed in Edward's reign. In the process for his deprivation he avowed himself ready as ever to maintain as well "the supremacy and supreme authority of the King's majesty that now is as the abolishing of the usurped power of the Bishop of Rome."

But with the later changes of the Protectorate Gardiner had seen his dream of a national yet orthodox Church vanish away. He had seen how inevitably severance from

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Rome drew with it a connexion with the Protestant Churches and a repudiation of Catholic belief. In the hours of imprisonment his mind fell back on the old ecclesiastical order with which the old spiritual order seemed inextricably entwined, and he was ready now to submit to the Papacy as the one means of preserving the faith to which he clung. His attitude was of the highest significance, for Gardiner more than anyone was a representative of the dominant English opinion of his day. As the moderate party which had supported the policy of Henry the Eighth saw its hopes disappear, it ranged itself, like the Bishop, on the side of a unity which could now only be brought about by reconciliation with Rome. The effort of the Protestants in Wyatt's insurrection to regain their power and revive the system of the Protectorate served only to give a fresh impulse to this drift of conservative opinion. Mary therefore found little opposition to her plans. The peers were won over by Philip through the pensions he lavished among them, while pressure was unscrupulously used by the Council to secure a compliant House of Commons. When the Parliament met in November these measures were found to have been successful. The attainder of Reginald Pole, who had been appointed by the Pope to receive the submission of the realm, was reversed; and the Legate entered London by the river with his cross gleaming from the prow of his barge. He was solemnly welcomed in full Parliament. The two Houses decided by a formal vote to return to the obedience of the Papal See; on the assurance of Pole in the Pope's name that holders of church lands should not be disturbed in their possession the statutes abolishing Papal jurisdiction in England were repealed; and Lords and Commons received on their knees an absolution which freed the realm from the guilt incurred by its schism and heresy.

Mary's difficulties. But, even in the hour of her triumph, the temper both of Parliament and the nation warned the Queen of the

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failure of her hope to bind England to a purely Catholic policy. The growing independence of the two Houses was seen in the impossibility of procuring from them any change in the order of succession. The victory of Rome was incomplete so long as its right of dispensation was implicitly denied by a recognition of Elizabeth's legitimacy, and Mary longed to avenge her mother by humbling the child of Anne Boleyn. But in spite of Pole's efforts and the Queen's support a proposal to oust her sister from the line of succession could not even be submitted to the Houses, nor could their assent be won to the postponing the succession of Elizabeth to that of Philip. The temper of the nation at large was equally decided. In the first Parliament of Mary a proposal to renew the laws against heresy had been thrown out by the Lords, even after the failure of Wyatt's insurrection. Philip's influence secured the re-enactment of the statute of Henry the Fifth in the Parliament which followed his arrival; but the sullen discontent of London compelled its Bishop, Bonner, to withdraw a series of articles of enquiry, by which he hoped to purge his diocese of heresy, and even the Council was divided on the question of persecution. In the very interests of Catholicism the Emperor himself counselled prudence and delay. Philip gave the same counsel. From the moment of his arrival the young King exercised a powerful influence over the Government, and he was gradually drawing into his hands the whole direction of affairs. But bigot as he was in matters of faith, Philip's temper was that of a statesman, not of a fanatic. If he came to England resolute to win the country to union with the Church, his conciliatory policy was already seen in the concessions he wrested from the Papacy in the matter of the Church lands, and his aim was rather to hold England together and to give time for a reaction of opinion than to revive the old discord by any measures of severity. It was indeed only from a united and contented England that he could hope for effective aid in the struggle of his

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house with France, and in spite of his pledges Philip's one aim in marrying Mary was to secure that aid.

But whether from without or from within warning was wasted on the fierce bigotry of the Queen. It was, as Gardiner asserted, not at the counsel of her ministers but by her own personal will that the laws against heresy had been laid before Parliament; and now that they were enacted Mary pressed for their execution. Her resolve was probably quickened by the action of the Protestant zealots. The failure of Wyatt's revolt was far from taming the enthusiasm of the wilder reformers. The restoration of the old worship was followed by outbreaks of bold defiance. A tailor of St. Giles in the Fields shaved a dog with the priestly tonsure. A cat was found hanging in the Cheap "with her head shorn, and the likeness of a vestment cast over her, with her forefeet tied together and a round piece of paper like a singing cake between them." Yet more galling were the ballads which were circulated in mockery of the mass, the pamphlets which came from the exiles over sea, the seditious broadsides dropped in the streets, the interludes in which the most sacred acts of the old religion were flouted with ribald mockery. All this defiance only served to quicken afresh the purpose of the Queen. But it was not till the opening of 1555, when she had already been a year and a half on the throne, that the opposition of her councillors was at last mastered and the persecution began. In February the deprived bishop of Gloucester, Hooper, was burned in his cathedral city, a London vicar, Lawrence Saunders, at Coventry, and Rogers, a prebendary of St. Paul's, at London. Ferrar, the deprived bishop of St. David's, who was burned at Caermarthen, was one of eight victims who suffered in March. Four followed in April and May, six in June, eleven in July, eighteen in August, eleven in September. In October Ridley, the deprived bishop of London, was drawn with Latimer from their prison at Oxford. "Play the man, Master Ridley!" cried the old preacher of the Reformation

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as the flames shot up around him; "we shall this day light up such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out."

If the Protestants had not known how to govern indeed, they knew how to die; and the cause which prosperity had ruined revived in the dark hour of persecution. The memory of their violence and greed faded away as they passed unwavering to their doom. Such a story as that of Rowland Taylor, the Vicar of Hadleigh, tells us more of the work which was now begun, and of the effect it was likely to produce, than pages of historic dissertation. Taylor, who as a man of mark had been one of the first victims chosen for execution, was arrested in London, and condemned to suffer in his own parish. His wife, "suspecting that her husband should that night be carried away," had waited through the darkness with her children in the porch of St. Botolph's beside Aldgate. "Now when the sheriff his company came against St. Botolph's Church Elizabeth cried, saying, 'O my dear father! Mother! mother! here is my father led away!' Then cried his wife, 'Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?'—for it was a very dark morning, that the one could not see the other. Dr. Taylor answered, 'I am here, dear wife,' and stayed. The sheriff's men would have led him forth, but the sheriff said, 'Stay a little, masters, I pray you, and let him speak to his wife.' Then came she to him, and he took his daughter Mary in his arms, and he and his wife and Elizabeth knelt down and said the Lord's prayer. At which sight the sheriff wept apace, and so did divers others of the company. After they had prayed he rose up and kissed his wife and shook her by the hand, and said, 'Farewell, my dear wife, be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience! God shall still be a father to my children.' . . . Then said his wife, 'God be with thee, dear Rowland! I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Hadleigh.'

"All the way Dr. Taylor was merry and cheerful as one

CHAP. II. **The Catholic Reaction. 1553-1558.** that accounted himself going to a most pleasant banquet or bridal. . . . Coming within two miles of Hadleigh he desired to light off his horse, which done he leaped and set a frisk or twain as men commonly do for dancing. 'Why, master Doctor,' quoth the Sheriff, 'how do you now?' He answered, 'Well, God be praised, Master Sheriff, never better; for now I know I am almost at home. I lack not past two stiles to go over, and I am even at my Father's house!' . . . The streets of Hadleigh were beset on both sides with men and women of the town and country who waited to see him; whom when they beheld so led to death, with weeping eyes and lamentable voices, they cried, 'Ah, good Lord! there goeth our good shepherd from us!'" The journey was at last over. "'What place is this,' he asked, 'and what meaneth it that so much people are gathered together?' It was answered, 'It is Oldham Common, the place where you must suffer, and the people are come to look upon you.' Then said he, 'Thanked be God, I am even at home!' . . . But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears and cried, saying, 'God save thee, good Dr. Taylor; God strengthen thee and help thee; the Holy Ghost comfort thee!' He wished, but was not suffered, to speak. When he had prayed, he went to the stake and kissed it, and set himself into a pitch-barrel which they had set for him to stand on, and so stood with his back upright against the stake, with his hands folded together and his eyes towards heaven, and so let himself be burned." One of the executioners "cruelly cast a fagot at him, which hit upon his head and brake his face that the blood ran down his visage. Then said Dr. Taylor, 'O friend, I have harm enough—what needed that?'" One more act of brutality brought his sufferings to an end. "So stood he still without either crying or moving, with his hands folded together, till Soyce with a halberd struck him on the head that the brains fell out, and the dead corpse fell down into the fire."

The terror of death was powerless against men like these. Bonner, the Bishop of London, to whom, as bishop of the diocese in which the Council sate, its victims were generally delivered for execution, but who, in spite of the nickname and hatred which his official prominence in the work of death earned him, seems to have been naturally a good-humoured and merciful man, asked a youth who was brought before him whether he thought he could bear the fire. The boy at once held his hand without flinching in the flame of a candle that stood by. Rogers, a fellow-worker with Tyndale in the translation of the Bible, and one of the foremost among the Protestant preachers, died bathing his hands in the flame "as if it had been in cold water." Even the commonest lives gleamed for a moment into poetry at the stake. "Pray for me," a boy, William Brown, who had been brought home to Brentwood to suffer, asked of the bystanders. "I will pray no more for thee," one of them replied, "than I will pray for a dog." "'Then,' said William, 'Son of God, shine upon me;'" and immediately the sun in the elements shone out of a dark cloud so full in his face that he was constrained to look another way; whereat the people mused because it was so dark a little time before." Brentwood lay within a district on which the hand of the Queen fell heavier than elsewhere. The persecution was mainly confined to the more active and populous parts of the country, to London, Kent, Sussex, and the Eastern Counties. Of the two hundred and eighty whom we know to have suffered during the last three years and a half of Mary's reign more than forty were burned in London, seventeen in the neighbouring village of Stratford-le-Bow, four in Islington, two in Southwark, and one each at Barnet, St. Albans, and Ware. Kent, at that time a home of mining and manufacturing industry, suffered as heavily as London. Of its sixty martyrs more than forty were furnished by Canterbury, which was then but a city of some few thousand inhabitants, and seven by Maidstone. The remaining eight suffered at Rochester,

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The area of the Martyrdoms.

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*Failure of
the persec-
ution.*

But heavily as the martyrdoms fell on the district within which they were practically confined, and where as we may conclude Protestantism was more dominant than elsewhere, the work of terror failed in the very ends for which it was wrought. The old spirit of insolent defiance, of outrageous violence, rose into fresh life at the challenge of persecution. A Protestant hung a string of puddings round a priest's neck in derision of his beads. The restored images were grossly insulted. The old scurrilous ballads against the mass and relics were heard in the streets. Men were goaded to sheer madness by the bloodshed and violence about them. One miserable wretch, driven to frenzy, stabbed the priest of St. Margaret's as he stood with the chalice in his hand. It was a more formidable sign of the times that acts of violence such as these no longer stirred the people at large to their former resentment. The horror of the persecution swept away all other feelings. Every death at the stake won hundreds to the cause for which the victims died. "You have lost the hearts of twenty thousands that were rank Papists within these twelve-months," a Protestant wrote triumphantly to Bonner. Bonner indeed, who had never been a very zealous persecutor, was sick of his work; and the energy of the bishops soon relaxed. But Mary had no thought of hesitation in the course she had entered on, and though the Imperial ambassador noted the rapid growth of public discontent "rattling

letters" from the council pressed the lagging prelates to fresh activity. Yet the persecution had hardly begun before difficulties were thickening round the Queen. In her passionate longing for an heir who would carry on her religious work Mary had believed herself to be with child; but in the summer of 1555 all hopes of any childbirth passed away, and the overthrow of his projects for the permanent acquisition of England to the House of Austria at once disenchanted Philip with his stay in the realm. But even had all gone well it was impossible for the King to remain longer in England. He was needed in the Netherlands to play his part in the memorable act which was to close the Emperor's political life. Already King of Naples and Lord of Milan, Philip received by his father's solemn resignation on the twenty-fifth of October the Burgundian heritage; and a month later Charles ceded to him the crowns of Castille and Aragon with their dependencies in the New World and in the Old. The Empire indeed passed to his uncle Ferdinand of Austria; but with this exception the whole of his father's vast dominions lay now in the grasp of Philip. Of the realms which he ruled, England was but one and far from the greatest one, and even had he wished to return his continued stay there became impossible.

He was forced to leave the direction of affairs to Cardinal Pole, who on the death of Gardiner in November 1555 took the chief place in Council. At once Papal Legate and chief minister of the Crown, Pole carried on that union of the civil and ecclesiastical authority which had been first seen in Wolsey and had formed the groundwork of the system of Cromwell. But he found himself hampered by difficulties which even the ability of Cromwell or Wolsey could hardly have met. The embassy which carried to Rome the submission of the realm found a fresh Pope, Paul the Fourth, on the throne. His accession marked the opening of a new era in the history of the Papacy. Till now the fortunes of Catholicism had been steadily sinking

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CHAP. II. to a lower ebb. With the Peace of Passau the Empire seemed lost to it. The new Protestant faith stood triumphant in the north of Germany, and it was already advancing to the conquest of the south. The nobles of Austria were forsaking the older religion. A Venetian ambassador estimated the German Catholics at little more than a tenth of the whole population of Germany. Eastward the nobles of Hungary and Poland became Protestants in a mass. In the west France was yielding more and more to heresy, and England had hardly been rescued from it by Mary's accession. Only where the dead hand of Spain lay heavy, in Castille, in Aragon, or in Italy, was the Reformation thoroughly crushed out; and even the dead hand of Spain failed to crush heresy in the Low Countries. But at the moment when ruin seemed certain the older faith rallied to a new resistance. While Protestantism was degraded and weakened by the prostitution of the Reformation to political ends, by the greed and worthlessness of the German princes who espoused its cause, by the factious lawlessness of the nobles in Poland and the Huguenots in France, while it wasted its strength in theological controversies and persecutions, in the bitter and venomous discussions between the Churches which followed Luther and the Churches which followed Zwingli or Calvin, the great communion which it assailed felt at last the uses of adversity. The Catholic world rallied round the Council of Trent. In the very face of heresy the Catholic faith was anew settled and defined. The Papacy was owned afresh as the centre of Catholic union. The enthusiasm of the Protestants was met by a counter enthusiasm among their opponents. New religious orders rose to meet the wants of the day; the Capuchins became the preachers of Catholicism, the Jesuits became not only its preachers but its directors, its schoolmasters, its missionaries, its diplomatists. Their organization, their blind obedience, their real ability, their fanatical zeal, galvanized the pulpit, the school, the confessional, into a new life.

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It was this movement, this rally of Catholicism, which now placed its representative on the Papal throne. At the moment when Luther was first opening his attack on the Papacy Giovanni Caraffa had laid down his sees of Chieti and Brindisi to found the order of Theatines in a little house on the Pincian Hill. His aim was the reformation of the clergy, but the impulse which he gave told on the growing fervour of the Catholic world, and its issue was seen in the institution of the Capuchins and the Jesuits. Created Cardinal by Paul the Third, he found himself face to face with the more liberal theologians who were longing for a reconciliation between Lutheranism and the Papacy, such as Contarini and Pole, but his violent orthodoxy foiled their efforts in the conference at Ratisbon, and prevailed on the Pope to trust to the sterner methods of the Inquisition. As Caraffa wielded its powers, the Inquisition spread terror throughout Italy. At due intervals groups of heretics were burned before the Dominican Church at Rome; scholars like Peter Martyr were driven over sea; and the publication of an index of prohibited books gave a deathblow to Italian literature. On the verge of eighty the stern Inquisitor became Pope as Paul the Fourth. His conception of the Papal power was as high as that of Hildebrand or Innocent the Third, and he flung contemptuously aside the system of compromise which his predecessor had been brought to adopt by the caution of the Emperor. "Charles," he said, was a "favourer of heretics," and he laid to his charge the prosperity of Lutheranism in the Empire. That England should make terms for its return to obedience galled his pride, while his fanaticism would hear of no surrender of the property of the Church. Philip, who had wrested the concession from Julius the Third, had no influence over a Pope who hoped to drive the Spaniards from Italy, and Pole was suspected by Paul of a leaning to heresy.

The English ambassadors found therefore a rough greeting when the terms of the submission were laid before the

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Pope. Paul utterly repudiated the agreement which had been entered into between the Legate and the Parliament; he demanded the restoration of every acre of Church property; and he annulled all alienation of it by a general bull. His attitude undid all that Mary had done. In spite of the pompous reconciliation in which the Houses had knelt at the feet of Pole, England was still unreconciled to the Papacy, for the country and the Pope were at issue on a matter where concession was now impossible on either side. The Queen's own heart went with the Pope's demand. But the first step on which she ventured towards a compliance with it showed the difficulties she would have to meet. The grant of the first-fruits to Henry the Eighth had undoubtedly rested on his claim of supremacy over the Church; and now that this was at an end Mary had grounds for proposing their restoration to church purposes. But the proposal was looked on as a step towards the resumption of the monastic lands, and after a hot and prolonged debate at the close of 1555 the Commons only assented to it by a small majority. It was plain that no hearing would be given to the Pope's demand for a restoration of all Church property; great lords were heard to threaten that they would keep their lands so long as they had a sword by their side; and England was thus left at hopeless variance with the Papacy.

Cranmer.

But difficult as Mary's task became, she clung as tenaciously as ever to her work of blood. The martyrdoms went steadily on, and at the opening of 1556 the sanction of Rome enabled the Queen to deal with a victim whose death woke all England to the reality of the persecution. Far as he stood in character beneath many who had gone before him to the stake, Cranmer stood high above all in his ecclesiastical position. To burn the Primate of the English Church for heresy was to shut out meaner victims from all hope of escape. And on the position of Cranmer none cast a doubt. The other prelates

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who had suffered had been placed in their sees after the separation from Rome, and were hardly regarded as bishops by their opponents. But, whatever had been his part in the schism, Cranmer had received his Pallium from the Pope. He was, in the eyes of all, Archbishop of Canterbury, the successor of St. Augustine and of St. Thomas in the second see of Western Christendom. Revenge however and religious zeal alike urged the Queen to bring Cranmer to the stake. First among the many decisions in which the Archbishop had prostituted justice to Henry's will stood that by which he had annulled the King's marriage with Catharine and declared Mary a bastard. The last of his political acts had been to join, whether reluctantly or no, in the shameless plot to exclude Mary from the throne. His great position too made Cranmer more than any man a representative of the religious revolution which had passed over the land. His figure stood with those of Henry and of Cromwell on the frontispiece of the English Bible. The decisive change which had been given to the character of the Reformation under Edward was due wholly to Cranmer. It was his voice that men heard and still hear in the accents of the English Liturgy.

His death.

As an Archbishop, Cranmer's judgement rested with no meaner tribunal than that of Rome, and his execution had been necessarily delayed till its sentence could be given. It was not till the opening of 1556 that the Papal see convicted him of heresy. As a heretic he was now condemned to suffer at the stake. But the courage which Cranmer had shown since the accession of Mary gave way the moment his final doom was announced. The moral cowardice which had displayed itself in his miserable compliance with the lust and despotism of Henry displayed itself again in six successive recantations by which he hoped to purchase pardon. But pardon was impossible; and Cranmer's strangely mingled nature found a power in its very weakness when he was brought into the church of St. Mary at Oxford on the twenty-first of

CHAP. II. March to repeat his recantation on the way to the stake. "Now," ended his address to the hushed congregation before him, "now I come to the great thing that troubleth my conscience more than any other thing that ever I said or did in my life, and that is the setting abroad of writings contrary to the truth; which here I now renounce and refuse as things written by my hand contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death to save my life, if it might be. And, forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, my hand therefore shall be the first punished; for if I come to the fire, it shall be the first burned." "This was the hand that wrote it," he again exclaimed at the stake, "therefore it shall suffer first punishment;" and holding it steadily in the flame "he never stirred nor cried" till life was gone.

War with
France.

It was with the unerring instinct of a popular movement that, among a crowd of far more heroic sufferers, the Protestants fixed, in spite of his recantations, on the martyrdom of Cranmer as the death-blow to Catholicism in England. For one man who felt within him the joy of Rowland Taylor at the prospect of the stake, there were thousands who felt the shuddering dread of Cranmer. The triumphant cry of Latimer could reach only hearts as bold as his own, while the sad pathos of the Primate's humiliation and repentance struck chords of sympathy and pity in the hearts of all. It is from that moment that we may trace the bitter remembrance of the blood shed in the cause of Rome; which, however partial and unjust it must seem to an historic observer, still lies graven deep in the temper of the English people. But the Queen struggled desperately on. She did what was possible to satisfy the unyielding Pope. In the face of the Parliament's significant reluctance even to restore the first-fruits to the Church, she refounded all she could of the abbeys which had been suppressed. One of the greatest of these, the Abbey of Westminster, was re-estab-

lished before the close of 1556, and John Feckenham installed as its abbot. Such a step could hardly fail to wake the old jealousy of any attempt to reclaim the Church lands, and thus to alienate the nobles and gentry from the Queen. They were soon to be alienated yet more by her breach of the solemn covenant on which her marriage was based. Even the most reckless of her counsellors felt the unwisdom of aiding Philip in his strife with France. The accession of England to the vast dominion which the Emperor had ceded to his son in 1555 all but realized the plans of Ferdinand the Catholic for making the house of Austria master of Western Christendom. France was its one effective foe; and the overthrow of France in the war which was going on between the two powers would leave Philip without a check. How keenly this was felt at the English council-board was seen in the resistance which was made to Philip's effort to drag his new realm into the war. Such an effort was in itself a crowning breach of faith, for the King's marriage had been accompanied by a solemn pledge that England should not be drawn into the strifes of Spain. But Philip knew little of good faith when his interest was at stake. The English fleet would give him the mastery of the seas, English soldiers would turn the scale in Flanders, and at the opening of 1557 the King again crossed the Channel and spent three months in pressing his cause on Mary and her advisers.

"He did more," says a Spanish writer of the time, "than any one would have believed possible with that proud and indomitable nation." What he was most aided by was provocation from France. A body of refugees who had found shelter there landed in Yorkshire in the spring; and their leader, Thomas Stafford, a grandson of the late Duke of Buckingham, called the people to rise against the tyranny of foreigners and "the satanic designs of an unlawful Queen." The French King hoped that a rising would give the Queen work at home; but the revolt was easily crushed, and the insult enabled Mary to over-

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ride her counsellors' reluctance and to declare war against France. The war opened with triumphs both on land and at sea. The junction of the English fleet made Philip master of the Channel. Eight thousand men, "all clad in their green," were sent to Flanders under Lord Pembroke, and joined Philip's forces in August in time to take part in the great victory of St. Quentin. In October the little army returned home in triumph, but the gleam of success vanished suddenly away. In the autumn of 1557 the English ships were defeated in an attack on the Orkneys. In January 1558 the Duke of Guise flung himself with characteristic secrecy and energy upon Calais and compelled it to surrender before succour could arrive. "The chief jewel of the realm," as Mary herself called it, was suddenly reft away; and the surrender of Guisnes, which soon followed, left England without a foot of land on the Continent.

*Mary and
Ireland.*

Bitterly as the blow was felt, the Council, though passionately pressed by the Queen, could find neither money nor men for any attempt to recover the town. The war indeed went steadily for Spain and her allies; and Philip owed his victory at Gravelines in the summer of 1558 mainly to the opportune arrival of ten English ships of war which opened fire on the flank of the French army that lay open to the sea. But England could not be brought to take further part in the contest. The levies which were being raised mutinied and dispersed. The forced loan to which Mary was driven to resort came in slowly. The treasury was drained not only by the opening of the war with France but by the opening of a fresh strife in Ireland. To the struggle of religion which had begun there under the Protectorate the accession of Mary had put an end. The shadowy form of the earlier Irish Protestantism melted quietly away. There were in fact no Protestants in Ireland save the new bishops; and when Bale had fled over sea from his diocese of Ossory and his fellow-prelates had been deprived the Irish

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Church resumed its old appearance. No attempt indeed was made to restore the monasteries; and Mary exercised her supremacy, deposed or appointed bishops, and repudiated Papal interference with her ecclesiastical acts as vigorously as her father. But the Mass was restored, the old modes of religious worship were again held in honour, and religious dissension between the Government and its Irish subjects came for the time to an end. With the close however of one danger came the rise of another. England was growing tired of the policy of conciliation which had been steadily pursued by Henry the Eighth and his successor. As yet it had been rewarded with precisely the sort of success which Wolsey and Cromwell anticipated. The chiefs had come quietly in to the plan, and their septs had followed them in submission to the new order. "The winning of the Earl of Desmond was the winning of the rest of Munster with small charges. The making O'Brien an Earl made all that country obedient." The Macwilliam became Lord Clanrickard, and the Fitzpatrick's Barons of Upper Ossory. A visit of the great northern chief who had accepted the title of Earl of Tyrone to the English Court was regarded as a marked step in the process of civilization.

In the south, where the system of English law was slowly spreading, the chieftains sate on the bench side by side with the English justices of the peace; and something had been done to check the feuds and disorder of the wild tribes between Limerick and Tipperary. "Men may pass quietly throughout these countries without danger of robbery or other displeasure." In the Clanrickard county, once wasted with war, "ploughing increaseth daily." In Tyrone and the north however the old disorder reigned without a check; and everywhere the process of improvement tried the temper of the English Deputies by the slowness of its advance. The only hope of any real progress lay in patience; and there were signs that the Government at Dublin found it hard to wait. The

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"rough handling" of the chiefs by Sir Edward Bellingham, a Lord Deputy under the Protector Somerset, roused a spirit of revolt that only subsided when the poverty of the Exchequer forced him to withdraw the garrisons he had planted in the heart of the country. His successor in Mary's reign, Lord Sussex, made raid after raid to no purpose on the obstinate tribes of the north, burning in one the Cathedral of Armagh and three other churches. A far more serious breach in the system of conciliation was made when the project of English colonization which Henry had steadily rejected was adopted by the same Lord Deputy, and when the country of the O'Connors was assigned to English settlers and made shire-land under the names of King's and Queen's Counties in honour of Philip and Mary. A savage warfare began at once between the planters and the dispossessed septs, a warfare which only ended in the following reign in the extermination of the Irishmen, and commissioners were appointed to survey waste lands with the aim of carrying the work of colonization into other districts. The pressure of the war against France put an end to these wider projects, but the strife in Meath went savagely on and proved a sore drain to the Exchequer.

Scotland
and
Protes-
tantism.

Nor was Mary without difficulties in the North. Religiously as well as politically her reign told in a marked way on the fortunes of Scotland. If the Queen's policy failed to crush Protestantism in England, it gave a new impulse to it in the northern realm. In Scotland the wealth and worldliness of the great churchmen had long ago spread a taste for heresy among the people; and Lollardy survived as a power north of the border long after it had almost died out to the south of it. The impulse of the Lutheran movement was seen in the diffusion of the new opinions by a few scholars, such as Wishart and Hamilton; but though Henry the Eighth pressed his nephew James the Fifth to follow him in the work he was doing in England, it was plain that the

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Scotch reformers could look for little favour from the Crown. The policy of the Scottish kings regarded the Church as their ally against the turbulent nobles, and James steadily held its enemies at bay. The Regent, Mary of Guise, clung to the same policy. But stoutly as the whole nation withstood the English efforts to acquire a political supremacy, the religious revolution in England told more and more on the Scotch nobles. No nobility was so poor as that of Scotland, and nowhere in Europe was the contrast between their poverty and the riches of the Church so great. Each step of the vast spoliation that went on south of the border, the confiscation of the lesser abbeys, the suppression of the greater, the secularization of chauntries and hospitals, woke a fresh greed in the baronage of the north. The new opinions soon found disciples among them. It was a group of Protestant nobles who surprized the Castle of St. Andrews and murdered Cardinal Beaton. The "Gospellers" from the Lowlands already formed a marked body in the army that fought at Pinkie Cleugh. As yet however the growth of the new opinions had been slow, and there had been till now little public show of resistance to the religion of the State.

With the accession of Mary however all was changed. Under Henry and Edward the Catholicism of Scotland had profited by the national opposition to a Protestant England; but now that Catholicism was again triumphant in England Protestantism became far less odious to the Scotch statesmen. A still greater change was wrought by the marriage with Philip. Such a match, securing as it did to England the aid of Spain in any future aggression upon Scotland, became a danger to the northern realm which not only drew her closer to France but forced her to give shelter and support to the sectaries who promised to prove a check upon Mary. Many of the exiles therefore who left England for the sake of religion found a refuge in Scotland. Amongst these was John Knox. Knox had been one of the

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followers of Wishart; he had acted as pastor to the Protestants who after Beaton's murder held the Castle of St. Andrews, and had been captured with them by a French force in the summer of 1547. The Frenchmen sent the heretics to the galleys; and it was as a galley slave in one of their vessels that Knox next saw his native shores. As the vessel lay tossing in the bay of St. Andrews, a comrade bade him look to the land, and asked him if he knew it. "I know it well" was the answer; "for I see the steeple of that place where God first in public opened my mouth to His glory; and I am fully persuaded, how weak that ever I now appear, I shall not depart this life till my tongue glorify His holy name in the same place!" It was long however before he could return. Released at the opening of 1549, Knox found shelter in England, where he became one of the most stirring among the preachers of the day, and was offered a bishopric by Northumberland. Mary's accession drove him again to France. But the new policy of the Regent now opened Scotland to the English refugees, and it was as one of these that Knox returned in 1555 to his own country. Although he soon withdrew to take charge of the English congregation at Frankfort and Geneva his energy had already given a decisive impulse to the new movement. In a gathering at the house of Lord Erskine he persuaded the assembly to "refuse all society with idolatry, and bind themselves to the uttermost of their power to maintain the true preaching of the Evangile, as God should offer to their preachers an opportunity." The confederacy woke anew the jealousy of the government, and persecution revived. But some of the greatest nobles now joined the reforming cause. The Earl of Morton, the head of the house of Douglas, the Earl of Argyle, the greatest chieftain of the west, and above all a bastard son of the late King, Lord James Stuart, who bore as yet the title of prior of St. Andrews, but who was to be better known afterwards as the Earl of Murray, placed them-

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selves at the head of the movement. The remonstrances of Knox from his exile at Geneva stirred them to interfere in behalf of the persecuted Protestants; and at the close of 1557 these nobles united with the rest of the Protestant leaders in an engagement which became memorable as the first among those Covenants which were to give shape and colour to Scotch religion.

"We," ran this solemn bond, "perceiving how Satan in his members, the Antichrists of our time, cruelly doth rage, seeking to overthrow and to destroy the Evangel of Christ, and His Congregation, ought according to our bounden duty to strive in our Master's cause even unto the death, being certain of our victory in Him. The which our duty being well considered, we do promise before the Majesty of God and His Congregation that we, by His grace, shall with all diligence continually apply our whole power, substance, and our very lives to maintain, set forward, and establish the most blessed Word of God and His Congregation, and shall labour at our possibility to have faithful ministers, purely and truly to minister Christ's Evangel and sacraments to His people. We shall maintain them, nourish them, and defend them, the whole Congregation of Christ and every member thereof, at our whole power and wearing of our lives, against Satan and all wicked power that does intend tyranny or trouble against the foresaid Congregation. Unto the which Holy Word and Congregation we do join us, and also do forsake and renounce the congregation of Satan with all the superstitious abomination and idolatry thereof: and moreover shall declare ourselves manifestly enemies thereto by this our faithful promise before God, testified to His Congregation by our subscription at these presents."

The Covenant of the Scotch nobles marked a new epoch in the strife of religions. Till now the reformers had opposed the doctrine of nationality to the doctrine of Catholicism. In the teeth of the pretensions which the Church advanced to a uniformity of religion in every land,

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whatever might be its differences of race or government, the first Protestants had advanced the principle that each prince or people had alone the right to determine its form of faith and worship. "Cujus regio" ran the famous phrase which embodied their theory, "ejus religio." It was the acknowledgement of this principle that the Lutheran princes obtained at the Diet of Spires; it was on this principle that Henry based his Act of Supremacy. Its strength lay in the correspondence of such a doctrine with the political circumstances of the time. It was the growing feeling of nationality which combined with the growing development of monarchical power to establish the theory that the political and religious life of each nation should be one, and that the religion of the people should follow the faith of the prince. Had Protestantism, as seemed at one time possible, secured the adhesion of all the European princes, such a theory might well have led everywhere as it led in England to the establishment of the worst of tyrannies, a tyranny that claims to lord alike over both body and soul. The world was saved from this danger by the tenacity with which the old religion still held its power. In half the countries of Europe the disciples of the new opinions had soon to choose between submission to their conscience and submission to their prince; and a movement which began in contending for the religious supremacy of Kings ended in those wars of religion which arrayed nation after nation against their sovereigns. In this religious revolution Scotland led the way. Her Protestantism was the first to draw the sword against earthly rulers. The solemn "Covenant" which bound together her "Congregation" in the face of the regency, which pledged its members to withdraw from all submission to the religion of the State and to maintain in the face of the State their liberty of conscience, opened that vast series of struggles which ended in Germany with the Peace of Westphalia and in England with the Toleration Act of William the Third.

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Exiles.

The 'Covenant' of the lords sounded a bold defiance to the Catholic reaction across the border. While Mary replaced the Prayer-book by the Mass, the Scotch lords resolved that wherever their power extended the Common Prayer should be read in all churches. While hundreds were going to the stake in England the Scotch nobles boldly met the burning of their preachers by a threat of war. "They trouble our preachers," ran their bold remonstrance against the bishops in the Queen-mother's presence; "they would murder them and us! shall we suffer this any longer? No, madam, it shall not be!" and there-with every man put on his steel bonnet. The Regent was helpless for the moment and could find refuge only in fair words, words so fair that for a while the sternest of the reformers believed her to be drifting to their faith. She was in truth fettered by the need of avoiding civil strife at a time when the war of England against France made a Scotch war against England inevitable. The nobles refused indeed to cross the border, but the threat of a Scotch invasion was one of the dangers against which Mary Tudor now found herself forced to provide. Nor was the uprise of Protestantism in Scotland the only result of her policy in giving fire and strength to the new religion. Each step in the persecution had been marked by a fresh flight of preachers, merchants, and gentry across the seas. "Some fled into France, some into Flanders, and some into the high countries of the Empire." As early as 1554 we find groups of such refugees at Frankfort, Emden, Zürich, and Strassburg. Calvin welcomed some of them at Geneva; the "lords of Berne" suffered a group to settle at Aarau; a hundred gathered round the Duchess of Suffolk at Wesel. Amongst the exiles we find many who were to be bishops and statesmen in the coming reign. Sir Francis Knollys was at Frankfort, Sir Francis Walsingham travelled in France; among the divines were the later archbishops Grindal and Sandys, and the later bishops Horne, Parkhurst, Aylmer, Jewel, and Cox. Mingled with these were men

CHAP. II. who had already played their part in Edward's reign, such as Poinet, the deprived Bishop of Winchester, Bale, the deprived Bishop of Ossory, and the preachers Lever and Knox.

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*The
Extreme
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testants.*

Gardiner had threatened that the fugitives should gnaw their fingers from hunger, but ample supplies reached them from London merchants and other partizans in England, and they seem to have lived in fair comfort while their brethren at home were "going to the fire." Their chief troubles sprang from strife among themselves. The hotter spirits among the English Protestants had seen with discontent the retention of much that they looked on as superstitious and Popish in even the last liturgy of Edward's reign. That ministers should still wear white surplices, that litanies should be sung, that the congregation should respond to the priest, that babes should be signed in baptism with the sign of the cross, that rings should be given in marriage, filled them with horror. Hooper, the leader of this party, refused when made bishop to don his rochet; and had only been driven by imprisonment to vest himself in "the rags of Popery." Trivial indeed as such questions seemed in themselves, an issue lay behind them which was enough to make men face worse evils than a prison. The royal supremacy, the headship of the Church, which Henry the Eighth claimed for himself and his successors, was, as we have seen, simply an application of the principle which the states of North Germany had found so effective in meeting the pretensions of the Emperor or the Pope. The same sentiment of national life took a new form in the preservation of whatever the change of religious thought left it possible to preserve in the national tradition of faith and worship. In the Lutheran churches, though the Mass was gone, reredos and crucifix remained untouched. In England the whole ecclesiastical machinery was jealously preserved. Its Church was still governed by bishops who traced their succession to the Apostles. The words of

its new Prayer-book adhered as closely as they might to the words of Missal and Breviary. What made such an arrangement possible was the weakness of the purely religious impulse in the earlier stages of the Reformation. In Germany indeed or in England, the pressure for theological change was small; the religious impulse told on but a small part, and that not an influential part of the population; it did in fact little more than quicken and bring into action the older and widely-felt passion for ecclesiastical independence.

But the establishment of this independence at once gave fresh force to the religious movement. From denouncing the Pope as a usurper of national rights men passed easily to denounce the Papal system as in itself anti-Christian. In setting aside the voice of the Papacy as a ground of faith the new churches had been forced to find a ground of faith in the Bible. But the reading and discussion of the Bible opened up a thousand questions of belief and ritual, and the hatred of Rome drew men more and more to find answers to such questions which were antagonistic to the creed and usages of a past that was identified in their eyes with the Papacy. Such questions could hardly fail to find an echo in the people at large. To the bulk of men ecclesiastical institutions are things dim and remote; and the establishment of ecclesiastical independence, though it gratified the national pride, could have raised little personal enthusiasm. But the direct and personal interest of every man seemed to lie in the right holding of religious truth, and thus the theological aspect of the Reformation tended more and more to supersede its political one. All that is generous and chivalrous in human feeling told in the same direction. To statesmen like Gardiner or Paget the acceptance of one form of faith or worship after another as one sovereign after another occupied the throne seemed, no doubt, a logical and inevitable result of their acceptance of the royal supremacy. But to the people at large there must have been something false and ignoble in the sight

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testantism
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macy.*

CHAP. II. of a statesman or a priest who had cast off the Mass under
 Edward to embrace it again under Mary, and who was
 ready again to cast it off at the will of Mary's successor.
 If worship and belief were indeed spiritual things, if they
 had any semblance of connexion with divine realities, men
 must have felt that it was impossible to put them on and
 off at a king's caprice. It was this, even more than the
 natural pity which they raised, that gave their weight to the
 Protestant martyrdoms under Mary. They stood out in
 emphatic protest against the doctrine of local religion, of a
 belief dictated by the will of kings. From the Primate
 of the Church to the "blind girl" who perished at Colches-
 ter, three hundred were found in England who chose rather
 to go to the fire than to take up again at the Queen's will
 what their individual conscience had renounced as a lie
 against God.

Calvin. But from the actual assertion of such a right of the
 individual conscience to find and hold what was true,
 even those who witnessed for it by their death would
 have shrunk. Driven by sheer force of fact from
 the theory of a national and royal faith, men still shud-
 dered to stand alone. The old doctrine of a Catholic
 Christianity flung over them its spell. Rome indeed they
 looked on as anti-Christ, but the doctrine which Rome had
 held so long and so firmly, the doctrine that truth should be
 coextensive with the world and not limited by national
 boundaries, that the Church was one in all countries and
 among all peoples, that there was a Christendom which
 embraced all kingdoms and a Christian law that ruled
 peoples and kings, became more and more the doctrine of
 Rome's bitterest opponents. It was this doctrine which
 found its embodiment in John Calvin, a young French
 scholar, driven in early manhood from his own country
 by the persecution of Francis the First. Calvin established
 himself at Basle, and produced there in 1535 at the age of
 twenty-six a book which was to form the theology of the
 Huguenot churches, his "Institutes of the Christian

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Religion." What was really original in this work was
 Calvin's doctrine of the organization of the Church and of
 its relation to the State. The base of the Christian republic
 was with him the Christian man, elected and called of God,
 preserved by his grace from the power of sin, predestinate
 to eternal life. Every such Christian man is in himself
 a priest, and every group of such men is a Church, self-
 governing, independent of all save God, supreme in its
 authority over all matters ecclesiastical and spiritual.
 The constitution of such a church, where each member as a
 Christian was equal before God, necessarily took a democratic
 form. In Calvin's theory of Church government it is the
 Church which itself elects its lay elders and lay deacons
 for purposes of administration; it is with the approval and
 consent of the Church that elders and deacons with the
 existing body of pastors elect new ministers. It is through
 these officers that the Church exercises its power of the
 keys, the power of diffusing the truth and the power
 of correcting error. To the minister belongs the preach-
 ing of the word and the direction of all religious instruc-
 tion; to the body of ministers belongs the interpretation
 of scripture and the decision of doctrine. On the other
 hand the administration of discipline, the supervision of
 the moral conduct of each professing Christian, the admo-
 nition of the erring, the excommunication and exclusion
 from the body of the Church of the unbelieving and the
 utterly unworthy, belongs to the Consistory, the joint
 assembly of ministers and elders. To this discipline
 princes as well as common men are alike subject; princes
 as well as common men must take their doctrine from
 the ministers of the Church.

The claims of the older faith to spiritual and eccle-
 siastical supremacy over the powers of earth reappeared in
 this theory. Calvin like the Papacy ignored all national
 independence, all pretensions of peoples as such to create
 their own system of church doctrine or church government.
 Doctrine and government he held to be already laid down

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in the words of the Bible, and all questions that rose out of those words came under the decision of the ecclesiastical body of ministers. Wherever a reformed religion appeared, there was provided for it a simple but orderly organization which in its range and effectiveness rivalled that of the older Catholicism. On the other hand this organization rested on a wholly new basis; spiritual and ecclesiastical power came from below not from above; the true sovereign in this Christian state was not Pope or Bishop but the Christian man. Despotism as the authority of pastor and elders seemed, pastor and elders were alike the creation of the whole congregation, and their judgement could in the last resort be adopted or set aside by it. Such a system stood out in bold defiance against the tendencies of the day. On its religious side it came into conflict with that principle of nationality, of ecclesiastical as well as civil subjection to the prince, on which the reformed Churches and above all the Church of England had till now been built up. As a vast and consecrated democracy it stood in contrast with the whole social and political framework of the European nations. Grave as we may count the faults of Calvinism, alien as its temper may in many ways be from the temper of the modern world, it is in Calvinism that the modern world strikes its roots, for it was Calvinism that first revealed the worth and dignity of Man. Called of God, and heir of heaven, the trader at his counter and the digger in his field suddenly rose into equality with the noble and the king.

Calvin
and the
Exiles.

It was this system that Calvin by a singular fortune was able to put into actual working in the little city of Geneva, where the party of the Reformation had become master and called him in 1536 to be their spiritual head. Driven out but again recalled, his influence made Geneva from 1541 the centre of the Protestant world. The refugees who crowded to the little town from persecution in France, in the Netherlands, in England, found there an exact and formal doctrine, a rigid discipline of manners and faith,

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a system of church government, a form of church worship, stripped, as they held, of the last remnant of the superstitions of the past. Calvin himself with his austere and frugal life, his enormous industry, his power of government, his quick decision, his undoubting self-confidence, his unswerving will, remained for three and twenty years till his death in 1564 supreme over Protestant opinion. His influence told heavily on England. From the hour of Cromwell's fall the sympathies of the English reformers had drawn them, not to the Lutheran Churches of North Germany, but to the more progressive Churches of the Rhineland and the Netherlands: and on the critical question of the Lord's Supper which mainly divided the two great branches of the Reformation Cranmer and his partisans became more definitely anti-sacramentarian as the years went by. At Edward's death the exiles showed their tendencies by seeking refuge not with the Lutheran Churches of North Germany but with the Calvinistic Churches of Switzerland or the Rhine; and contact with such leaders as Bullinger at Zürich or Calvin at Geneva could hardly fail to give fresh vigour to the party which longed for a closer union with the foreign churches and a more open breach with the past.

The results of this contact first showed themselves at Frankfort. At the instigation of Whittingham, who in Elizabeth's days became Dean of Durham, a body of English exiles that had found shelter there resolved to reform both worship and discipline. The obnoxious usages were expunged from the Prayer-book, omissions were made in the communion service, a minister and deacons chosen, and rules drawn up for church government after the Genevan model. Free at last "from all dregs of superstitious ceremonies" the Frankfort refugees thanked God "that had given them such a church in a strange land wherein they might hear God's holy word preached, the sacraments rightly ministered, and discipline used, which in their own country could never be obtained." But their invitation to the

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other English exiles to join them in the enjoyment of these blessings met with a steady repulse. Lever and the exiles at Zürich refused to come unless they might "altogether serve and praise God as freely and uprightly as the order last taken in the Church of England permit-teth and presenteth, for we are fully determined to admit and use no other." The main body of the exiles who were then gathered at Strassburg echoed the refusal. Knox however, who had been chosen minister by the Frankfort congregation, moved rapidly forward, rejecting the com-munion service altogether as superstitious, and drawing up a new 'order' of worship after the Genevan model. But in the spring of 1555 these efforts were foiled by the arrival of fresh exiles from England of a more conserva-tive turn: the reformers were outvoted; Knox was driven from the town by the magistrates 'in fear of the Emperor' whom he had outraged in an 'Admonition' to the English people which he had lately issued; and the English service was restored. Whittingham and his adherents, still resolute, as Bale wrote, "to erect a Church of the Purity" (we may perhaps trace in the sneer the origin of their later name of Puritans) found a fresh refuge at Basle and Geneva, where the leaders of the party occu-pied themselves in a metrical translation of the Psalms which left its traces on English psalmody and in the production of what was afterwards known as the Geneva Bible.

The
seditious
books.

Petty as this strife at Frankfort may seem, it marks the first open appearance of English Puritanism, and the beginning of a struggle which widened through the reign of Elizabeth till under the Stuarts it broke England in pieces. But busy as they were in strife among themselves, the exiles were still more busy in fanning the discontent at home. Books, pamphlets, broadsides, were written and sent for distribution to England. The violence of their language was incredible. No sooner had Bonner issued his injunctions than Bale denounced him in a fierce reply

as "a beastly belly-god and damnable dung-hill." With a spirit worthy of the "bloody bitesheeps" whom he attacked, the ex-Bishop of Ossory regretted that when Henry plucked down Becket's shrine he had not burned the idolatrous priests upon it. It probably mattered little to Bale that at the moment when he wrote not a single Protestant had as yet been sent to the stake; but language such as this was hardly likely to stir Mary to a spirit of moderation. The Spanish marriage gave the refugees a fairer opportunity of attack, and the Government was forced to make enquiries of the wardens of city gilds "whether they had seen or heard of any of these books which had come from beyond seas." The violence of the exiles was doubled by the suppression of Wyatt's revolt. Poinet, the late Bishop of Winchester, who had taken part in it, fled over sea to write a "Sharp Tractate of political power" in which he discussed the question "whether it be lawful to depose an evil governor and kill a tyrant."

But with the actual outbreak of persecution and the death of Cranmer all restraint was thrown aside. In his "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women" Knox denounced Mary as a Jezebel, a traitress, and a bastard. He declared the rule of women to be against the law of Nature and of God. The duty, whether of the estates or people of the realm, was "first to remove from honour and authority that monster in nature; secondarily, if any presume to defend that impiety, they ought not to fear first to pronounce, then after to execute against them the sentence of death." To keep the oath of allegiance was "nothing but plain rebellion against God." "The day of vengeance," burst out the writer "which shall apprehend that horrible monster, Jezebel of England, and such as maintain her monstrous cruelty is already appointed in the counsel of the Eternal; and I verily believe that it is so nigh that she shall not reign so long in tyranny as hitherto she hath done, when God shall declare himself her enemy." Another exile, Goodman,

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enquired "how superior powers ought to be obeyed of their subjects; and wherein they may lawfully by God's word be disobeyed and resisted." His book was a direct summons to rebellion. "By giving authority to an idolatrous woman" Goodman wrote to his English fellow-subjects, "ye have banished Christ and his Gospel. Then in taking the same authority from her you shall restore Christ and his word, and shall do well. In obeying her you have disobeyed God; then in disobeying her you shall please God." "Though it should appear at the first sight," he urged, "a great disorder that the people should take unto them the punishment of transgressions, yet when the magistrates and other officers cease to do their duties they are as it were without officers, yea, worse than if they had none at all, and then God giveth the sword into the people's hand." And what the people were to do with the sword Poinet had already put very clearly. It was the "ungodly serpent Mary" who was "the chief instrument of all this present misery in England." "Now both by God's laws and man's," concluded the bishop, "she ought to be punished with death, as an open idolatress in the sight of God, and a cruel murderer of His saints before men, and merciless traitress to her own native country."

Behind the wild rhetoric of words like these lay the new sense of a prophetic power, the sense of a divine commission given to the preachers of the Word to rebuke nobles and kings. At the moment when the policy of Cromwell crushed the Church as a political power and freed the growing Monarchy from the constitutional check which its independence furnished, a new check offered itself in the very enthusiasm which sprang out of the wreck of the great religious body. Men stirred with a new sense of righteousness and of a divine government of the world, men too whose natural boldness was quickened and fired by daily contact with the older seers who rebuked David or Jezebel, could not hold their peace in the presence of wrong. While nobles and statesmen were cowering in silence

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before the dreaded power of the Kingship the preachers spoke bluntly out. Not only Latimer, but Knox, Grindal, and Lever had uttered fiery remonstrances against the plunderers of Edward's reign. Bradford had threatened them with the divine judgement which at last overtook them. "The judgement of the Lord! The judgement of the Lord!" cried he, with a lamentable voice and weeping tears." Wise or unwise, the pamphlets of the exiles only carried on this theory to its full developement. The great conception of the mediæval Church, that of the responsibility of Kings to a spiritual power, was revived at an hour when Kingship was trampling all responsibility to God or man beneath its feet. Such a revival was to have large and beneficial issues in our later history. Gathering strength under Elizabeth, it created at the close of her reign that moral force of public opinion which under the name of Puritanism brought the acts and policy of our kings to the tests of reason and the Gospel. However ill directed that force might be, however erroneously such tests were often applied, it is to this new force that we owe the restoration of liberty and the establishment of religious freedom. As the voice of the first Christian preachers had broken the despotism of the Roman Empire, so the voice of the preachers of Puritanism broke the despotism of the English Monarchy.

But great as their issues were to be, for the moment *Elizabeth*. these protests only quickened the persecution at home. We can hardly wonder that the arrival of Goodman's book in England in the summer of 1558 was followed by stern measures to prevent the circulation of such incentives to revolt. "Whereas divers books" ran a royal proclamation, "filled with heresy, sedition, and treason, have of late and be daily brought into the realm out of foreign countries and places beyond seas, and some also covertly printed within this realm and cast abroad in sundry parts thereof, whereby not only God is dishonoured but also encouragement is given to disobey

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lawful princes and governors," any person possessing such books "shall be reported and taken for a rebel, and shall without delay be executed for that offence according to the order of martial law." But what really robbed these pamphlets of all force for harm was the prudence and foresight of the people itself. Never indeed did the nation show its patient good sense more clearly than in the later years of Mary's reign. While fires blazed in Smithfield and news of defeat came from over sea, while the hot voices of Protestant zealots hounded men on to assassination and revolt, the bulk of Englishmen looked quietly from the dying Queen to the girl who in a little while must wear her crown. What nerved men to endure the shame and bloodshed about them was the certainty of the speedy succession of the daughter of Anne Boleyn. Elizabeth was now in her twenty-fifth year. Personally she had much of her mother's charm with more than her mother's beauty. Her figure was commanding, her face long but queenly and intelligent, her eyes quick and fine. She had grown up amidst the liberal culture of Henry's court a bold horsewoman, a good shot, a graceful dancer, a skilled musician, and an accomplished scholar. Even among the highly-trained women who caught the impulse of the New Learning she stood in the extent of her acquirements without a peer. Ascham, who succeeded Grindal and Cheke in the direction of her studies, tells us how keen and resolute was Elizabeth's love of learning, even in her girlhood. At sixteen she already showed "a man's power of application" to her books. She had read almost the whole of Cicero and a great part of Livy. She began the day with the study of the New Testament in Greek, and followed this up by reading selected orations of Isocrates and the tragedies of Sophocles. She could speak Latin with fluency and Greek moderately well. Her love of classical culture lasted through her life. Amidst the press and cares of her later reign we find Ascham recording how "after dinner I went up to read with the Queen's

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majesty that noble oration of Demosthenes against Æschines." At a later time her Latin served her to rebuke the insolence of a Polish ambassador, and she could "rub up her rusty Greek" at need to bandy pedantry with a Vice-Chancellor. But Elizabeth was far as yet from being a mere pedant. She could already speak French and Italian as fluently as her mother-tongue. In later days we find her familiar with Ariosto and Tasso. The purity of her literary taste, the love for a chaste and simple style, which Ascham noted with praise in her girlhood, had not yet perished under the influence of euphuism. But even amidst the affectation and love of anagrams and puerilities which sullied her later years Elizabeth remained a lover of letters and of all that was greatest and purest in letters. She listened with delight to the "Faery Queen," and found a smile for "Master Spenser" when he appeared in her presence.

From the bodily and mental energy of her girlhood, the close of Edward's reign drew Elizabeth at nineteen to face the sterner problems of religion and politics. In the daring attempt of Northumberland to place Jane Grey on the throne Elizabeth's rights were equally set aside with those of Mary; and the first public act of the girl was to call the gentry to her standard and to join her sister with five hundred followers in her train. But the momentary union was soon dissolved. The daughter of Catharine could look with little but hate on the daughter of Anne Boleyn. Elizabeth's tendency to the "new religion" jarred with the Queen's bigotry; and the warnings of the imperial ambassador were hardly needful to spur Mary to watch jealously a possible pretender to her throne. The girl bent to the Queen's will in hearing mass, but her manner showed that the compromise was merely a matter of obedience, and fed the hopes of the Protestant zealots who saw in the Spanish marriage a chance of driving Mary from the throne. The resolve which the Queen showed to cancel her sister's right of

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succession only quickened the project for setting Elizabeth in her place; and it was to make Elizabeth their sovereign that Suffolk rose in Leicestershire and Wyatt and his Kentishmen marched against London Bridge. The failure of the rising seemed to ensure her doom. The Emperor pressed for her death as a security for Philip on his arrival; and the detection of a correspondence with the French King served as a pretext for her committal to the Tower. The fierce Tudor temper broke through Elizabeth's self-control as she landed at Traitor's Gate. "Are all these harnessed men there for me?" she cried as she saw the guard, "it needed not for me, being but a weak woman!" and passionately calling on the soldiers to "bear witness that I come as no traitor!" she flung herself down on a stone in the rain and refused to enter her prison. "Better sitting here than in a worse place," she cried; "I know not whither you will bring me." But Elizabeth's danger was less than it seemed. Wyatt denied to the last her complicity in the revolt, and in spite of Gardiner's will to "go roundly to work" with her the Lords of the Council forced Mary to set her free. The Queen's terrors however revived with her hopes of a child in the summer of 1555. To Mary her sister seemed the one danger which threatened the succession of her coming babe and the vast issues which hung on it, and Elizabeth was summoned to her sister's side and kept a close prisoner at Hampton Court. Philip joined in this precaution, for "holding her in his power he could depart safely and without peril" in the event of the Queen's death in childbirth; and other plans were perhaps already stirring his breast. Should Mary die, a fresh match might renew his hold on England; "he might hope," writes the Venetian ambassador "with the help of many of the nobility, won over by his presents and favours, to marry her (Elizabeth) again, and thus succeed anew to the crown."

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But whatever may have been Philip's designs, the time had not as yet come for their realization; the final dis-

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appointment of the Queen's hopes of childbirth set Elizabeth free, and in July she returned to her house at Ashridge. From this moment her position was utterly changed. With the disappearance of all chance of offspring from the Queen and the certainty of Mary's coming death her sister's danger passed away. Elizabeth alone stood between England and the succession of Mary Stuart; and, whatever might be the wishes of the Queen, the policy of the House of Austria forced it to support even the daughter of Anne Boleyn against a claimant who would bind England to the French monarchy. From this moment therefore Philip watched jealously over Elizabeth's safety. On his departure for the Continent he gave written instructions to the Queen to show favour to her sister, and the charge was repeated to those of his followers whom he left behind him. What guarded her even more effectually was the love of the people. When Philip at a later time claimed Elizabeth's gratitude for his protection she told him bluntly that her gratitude was really due neither to him nor her nobles, though she owned her obligations to both, but to the English people. It was they who had saved her from death and hindered all projects for barring her right to the throne. "It is the people," she said, "who have placed me where I am now." It was indeed their faith in Elizabeth's speedy succession that enabled Englishmen to bear the bloodshed and shame of Mary's later years, and to wait patiently for the end.

Nor were these years of waiting without value for Elizabeth herself. The steady purpose, the clear perception of a just policy which ran through her wonderful reign, were formed as the girl looked coolly on at the chaos of bigotry and misrule which spread before her. More and more she realized what was to be the aim of her after life, the aim of reuniting the England which Edward and Mary alike had rent into two warring nations, of restoring again that English independence which Mary was trailing at the feet of Spain. With such an aim she could draw to her the

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men who, indifferent like herself to purely spiritual considerations, and estranged from Mary's system rather by its political than its religious consequences, were anxious for the restoration of English independence and English order. It was among these "Politicals," as they were soon to be called, that Elizabeth found at this moment a counsellor who was to stand by her side through the long years of her after reign. William Cecil sprang from the smaller gentry whom the changes of the time were bringing to the front. He was the son of a Yeoman of the Wardrobe at Henry's court; but his abilities had already raised him at the age of twenty-seven to the post of secretary to the Duke of Somerset, and through Somerset's Protectorate he remained high in his confidence. He was seized by the Lords on the Duke's arrest, and even sent to the Tower; but he was set at liberty with his master, and his ability was now so well known that a few months later saw him Secretary of State under Northumberland. The post and the knighthood which accompanied it hardly compensated for the yoke which Northumberland's pride laid upon all who served him, or for the risks in which his ambition involved them. Cecil saw with a fatal clearness the silent opposition of the whole realm to the system of the Protectorate, and the knowledge of this convinced him that the Duke's schemes for a change in the succession were destined to failure. On the disclosure of the plot to set Mary aside he withdrew for some days from the Court, and even meditated flight from the country, till fear of the young King's wrath drew him back to share in the submission of his fellow counsellors and to pledge himself with them to carry the new settlement into effect. But Northumberland had no sooner quitted London than Cecil became the soul of the intrigues by which the royal Council declared themselves in Mary's favour. His desertion of the Duke secured him pardon from the Queen, and though he was known to be in heart "a heretic" he continued at

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court, conformed like Elizabeth to the established religion, confessed and attended mass. Cecil was employed in bringing Pole to England and in attending him in embassies abroad. But his caution held him aloof from any close connexion with public affairs. He busied himself in building at Burghley and in the culture of the Church lands he had won from Edward the Sixth, while he drew closer to the girl who alone could rescue England from the misgovernment of Mary's rule. Even before the Queen's death it was known that Cecil would be the chief counsellor of the coming reign. "I am told for certain," the Spanish ambassador wrote to Philip after a visit to Elizabeth during the last hours of Mary's life, "that Cecil who was secretary to King Edward will be her secretary also. He has the character of a prudent and virtuous man, although a heretic." But it was only from a belief that Cecil retained at heart the convictions of his earlier days that men could call him a heretic. In all outer matters of faith or worship he conformed to the religion of the state.

It is idle to charge Cecil, or the mass of Englishmen who conformed with him in turn to the religion of Henry, of Edward, of Mary, and of Elizabeth, with baseness or hypocrisy. They followed the accepted doctrine of the time—that every realm, through its rulers, had the sole right of determining what should be the form of religion within its bounds. What the Marian persecution was gradually pressing on such men was a conviction, not of the falsehood of such a doctrine, but of the need of limiting it. Under Henry, under Edward, under Mary, no distinction had been drawn between inner belief and outer conformity. Every English subject was called upon to adjust his conscience as well as his conduct to the varying policy of the state. But the fires of Smithfield had proved that obedience such as this could not be exacted save by a persecution which filled all England with horror. Such a persecution indeed failed in the very end for which it

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Politicals.*

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was wrought. Instead of strengthening religious unity, it gave a new force to religious separation; it enlisted the conscience of the zealot in the cause of resistance; it secured the sympathy of the great mass of waverers to those who withstood the civil power. To Cecil, as to the purely political statesmen of whom he was the type, such a persecution seemed as needless as it was mischievous. Conformity indeed was necessary, for men could as yet conceive of no state without a religion or of civil obedience apart from compliance with the religious order of the state. But only outer conformity was needed. That no man should set up a worship other than that of the nation at large, that every subject should duly attend at the national worship, Cecil believed to be essential to public order. But he saw no need for prying into the actual beliefs of those who conformed to the religious laws of the realm, nor did he think that such beliefs could be changed by the fear of punishment. While refusing freedom of worship therefore, Cecil, like Elizabeth, was ready to concede freedom of conscience. And in this concession we can hardly doubt that the bulk of Englishmen went with him. Catholics shared with Protestants the horror of Mary's persecution. To Protestantism indeed the horror of the persecution had done much to give a force such as it had never had before. The number of Protestants grew with every murder done in the cause of Catholicism. But they still remained a small part of the realm. What the bulk of Englishmen had been driven to by the martyrdoms was not a change of creed, but a longing for religious peace and for such a system of government as, without destroying the spiritual oneness of the nation, would render a religious peace possible. And such a system of government Cecil and Elizabeth were prepared to give.

Mary's death.

We may ascribe to Cecil's counsels somewhat of the wise patience with which Elizabeth waited for the coming crown. Her succession was assured, and the throng of visitors to her presence showed a general sense that

the Queen's end was near. Mary stood lonely and desolate in her realm. "I will not be buried while I am living, as my sister was," Elizabeth said in later years. "Do I not know how during her life every one hastened to me at Hatfield?" The bloodshed indeed went on more busily than ever. It had spread now from bishops and priests to the people itself, and the sufferers were sent in batches to the flames. In a single day thirteen victims, two of them women, were burned at Stratford-le-Bow. Seventy-three Protestants of Colchester were dragged through the streets of London tied to a single rope. A new commission for the suppression of heresy was exempted by royal authority from all restrictions of law which fettered its activity. But the work of terror broke down before the silent revolt of the whole nation. The persecution failed even to put an end to heretical worship. Not only do we find ministers moving about in London and Kent to hold "secret meetings of the Gospellers," but up to the middle of 1555 four parishes in Essex still persisted in using the English Prayer-book. Open marks of sympathy at last began to be offered to the victims at the stake. "There were seven men burned in Smithfield the twenty-eighth day of July," a Londoner writes in 1558, "a fearful and a cruel proclamation being made that under pain of present death no man should either approach nigh unto them, touch them, neither speak to them nor comfort them. Yet were they so comfortably taken by the hand and so goodly comforted, notwithstanding that fearful proclamation and the present threatenings of the sheriffs and sergeants, that the adversaries themselves were astonished." The crowd round the fire shouted "Amen" to the martyrs' prayers, and prayed with them that God would strengthen them. What galled Mary yet more was the ill will of the Pope. Paul the Fourth still adhered to his demand for full restoration of the Church lands, and held England as only partly reconciled to the Holy See. He was hostile to Philip; he was yet more hostile to Pole. At this

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CHAPTER III.

THE ENGLAND OF ELIZABETH.

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TRADITION still points out the tree in Hatfield Park beneath which Elizabeth was sitting when she received the news of her peaceful accession to the throne. She fell on her knees, and drawing a long breath, exclaimed at last, "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." To the last these words remained stamped on the golden coinage of the Queen. The sense never left her that her preservation and her reign were the issues of a direct interposition of God. Daring and self-confident indeed as was her temper, it was awed into seriousness by the weight of responsibility which fell on her with her sister's death. Never had the fortunes of England sunk to a lower ebb. Dragged at the heels of Philip into a useless and ruinous war, the country was left without an ally save Spain. The loss of Calais gave France the mastery of the Channel, and seemed to English eyes "to introduce the French King within the threshold of our house." "If God start not forth to the helm," wrote the Council in an appeal to the country, "we be at the point of greatest misery that can happen to any people, which is to become thrall to a foreign nation." The French King in fact, "bestrode the realm, having one foot in Calais and the other in Scotland." Ireland too was torn with civil war, while Scotland, always a danger in the north, had become formidable through the

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Her religious policy.

It was with the religious difficulty that Elizabeth was called first to deal; and the way in which she dealt with it showed at once the peculiar bent of her mind. The young Queen was not without a sense of religion; at moments of peril or deliverance throughout her reign her acknowledgements of a divine protection took a strange depth and earnestness. But she was almost wholly destitute of spiritual emotion, or of any consciousness of the vast questions with which theology strove to deal. While the world around her was being swayed more and more by theological beliefs and controversies, Elizabeth was absolutely untouched by them. She was a child of the Italian Renaissance rather than of the New Learning of Colet or Erasmus, and her attitude towards the enthusiasm of her time was that of Lorenzo de' Medici towards Savonarola. Her mind was untroubled

by the spiritual problems which were vexing the minds around her; to Elizabeth indeed they were not only unintelligible, they were a little ridiculous. She had been brought up under Henry amidst the ritual of the older Church; under Edward she had submitted to the English Prayer-book, and drunk in much of the Protestant theology; under Mary she was ready after a slight resistance to conform again to the mass. Her temper remained unchanged through the whole course of her reign. She showed the same intellectual contempt for the superstition of the Romanist as for the bigotry of the Protestant. While she ordered Catholic images to be flung into the fire, she quizzed the Puritans as "brethren in Christ." But she had no sort of religious aversion from either Puritan or Papist. The Protestants grumbled at the Catholic nobles whom she admitted to the presence. The Catholics grumbled at the Protestant statesmen whom she called to her council board. To Elizabeth on the other hand the arrangement was the most natural thing in the world. She looked at theological differences in a purely political light. She agreed with Henry the Fourth that a kingdom was well worth a mass. It seemed an obvious thing to her to hold out hopes of conversion as a means of deceiving Philip, or to gain a point in negotiation by restoring the crucifix to her chapel. The first interest in her own mind was the interest of public order, and she never could understand how it could fail to be the first in every one's mind.

One memorable change marked the nobler side of the policy she brought with her to the throne. Elizabeth's accession was at once followed by a close of the religious persecution. Whatever might be the changes that awaited the country, conformity was no longer to be enforced by the penalty of death. At a moment when Philip was presiding at *autos-de-fé* and Henry of France plotting a massacre of his Huguenot subjects, such a resolve was a gain for humanity as well as

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Elizabeth's toleration.

CHAP. III. a step towards religious toleration. And from this resolve Elizabeth never wavered. Through all her long reign, save a few Anabaptists whom the whole nation loathed as blasphemers of God and dreaded as enemies of social order, no heretic was "sent to the fire." It was a far greater gain for humanity when the Queen declared her will to meddle in no way with the consciences of her subjects. She would hear of no inquisition into a man's private thoughts on religious matters or into his personal religion. Cecil could boldly assert in her name at a later time the right of every Englishman to perfect liberty of religious opinion. Such a liberty of opinion by no means implied liberty of public worship. On the incompatibility of freedom of worship with public order Catholic and Protestant were as yet at one. The most advanced reformers did not dream of contending for a right to stand apart from the national religion. What they sought was to make the national religion their own. The tendency of the reformation had been to press for the religious as well as the political unity of every state. Even Calvin looked forward to the winning of the nations to a purer faith without a suspicion that the religious movement which he headed, would end in establishing the right even of the children of "antichrist" to worship as they would in a Protestant commonwealth. If the Protestant lords in Scotland had been driven to assert a right of nonconformity, if the Huguenots of France were following their example, it was with no thought of asserting the right of every man to worship God as he would. From the claim of such a right Knox or Coligni would have shrunk with even greater horror than Elizabeth. What they aimed at was simply the establishment of a truce till by force or persuasion they could win the realms that tolerated them for their own. In this matter therefore Elizabeth was at one with every statesman of her day. While granting freedom of conscience to her subjects, she was resolute to exact an outward conformity to the established religion.

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But men watched curiously to see what religion the Queen would establish. Even before her accession the keen eye of the Spanish ambassador had noted her "great admiration for the king her father's mode of carrying on matters," as a matter of ill omen for the interests of Catholicism. He had marked that the ladies about her and the counsellors on whom she seemed about to rely were, like Cecil, "held to be heretics." "I fear much," he wrote, "that in religion she will not go right." As keen an instinct warned the Protestants that the tide had turned. The cessation of the burnings, and the release of all persons imprisoned for religion, seemed to receive their interpretation when Elizabeth on her entry into London kissed an English Bible which the citizens presented to her and promised "diligently to read therein." The exiles at Strassburg or Geneva flocked home with wild dreams of a religious revolution and of vengeance upon their foes. But hopes and fears alike met a startling check. For months there was little change in either government or religion. If Elizabeth introduced Cecil and his kinsman, Sir Nicholas Bacon, to her council board, she retained as yet most of her sister's advisers. The Mass went on as before, and the Queen was regular in her attendance at it. As soon as the revival of Protestantism showed itself in controversial sermons and insults to the priesthood it was bridled by a proclamation which forbade unlicensed preaching and enforced silence on the religious controversy. Elizabeth showed indeed a distaste for the elevation of the Host, and allowed the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments to be used in English. But months passed after her accession before she would go further than this. A royal proclamation which ordered the existing form of worship to be observed "till consultation might be had in Parliament by the Queen and the Three Estates" startled the prelates; and only one bishop could be found to assist at the coronation of Elizabeth. But no change was made in the ceremonies of the corona-

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tion; the Queen took the customary oath to observe the liberties of the Church, and conformed to the Catholic ritual. There was little in fact to excite any reasonable alarm among the adherents of the older faith, or any reasonable hope among the adherents of the new. "I will do," the Queen said, "as my father did." Instead of the reforms of Edward and the Protectorate, the Protestants saw themselves thrown back on the reforms of Henry the Eighth. Even Henry's system indeed seemed too extreme for Elizabeth. Her father had at any rate broken boldly from the Papacy. But the first work of the Queen was to open negotiations for her recognition with the Papal Court.

Elizabeth
and
Philip.

What shaped Elizabeth's course in fact was hard necessity. She found herself at war with France and Scotland, and her throne threatened by the claim of the girl who linked the two countries, the claim of Mary Stuart, at once Queen of Scotland and wife of the Dauphin Francis. On Elizabeth's accession Mary and Francis assumed by the French King's order the arms and style of English sovereigns: and if war continued it was clear that their pretensions would be backed by Henry's forces as well as by the efforts of the Scots. Against such a danger Philip of Spain was Elizabeth's only ally. Philip's policy was at this time a purely conservative one. The vast schemes of ambition which had so often knit both Pope and Protestants, Germany and France, against his father were set aside by the young King. His position indeed was very different from that of Charles the Fifth. He was not Emperor. He had little weight in Germany. Even in Italy his influence was less than his father's. He had lost with Mary's death the crown of England. His most valuable possessions outside Spain, the provinces of the Netherlands, were disaffected to a foreign rule. All the King therefore aimed at was to keep his own. But the Netherlands were hard to keep: and with France mistress of England as of Scotland, and so mistress

of the Channel, to keep them would be impossible. Sheer necessity forbade Philip to suffer the union of the three crowns of the west on the head of a French King; and the French marriage of Mary Stuart pledged him to oppose her pretensions and support Elizabeth's throne. For a moment he even dreamed of meeting the union of France and Scotland by that union of England with Spain which had been seen under Mary. He offered Elizabeth his hand. The match was a more natural one than Philip's union with her sister, for the young King's age was not far from her own. The offer however was courteously put aside, for Elizabeth had no purpose of lending England to the ambition of Spain, nor was it possible for her to repeat her sister's unpopular experiment. But Philip remained firm in his support of her throne. He secured for her the allegiance of the Catholics within her realm, who looked to him as their friend while they distrusted France as an ally of heretics. His envoys supported her cause in the negotiations at Câteau Cambresis; he suffered her to borrow money and provide herself with arms in his provinces of the Netherlands. At such a crisis Elizabeth could not afford to alienate Philip by changes which would roughly dispel his hopes of retaining her within the bounds of Catholicism.

Nor is there any sign that Elizabeth had resolved on a defiance of the Papacy. She was firm indeed to assert her father's claim of supremacy over the clergy and her own title to the throne. But the difficulties in the way of an accommodation on these points were such as could be settled by negotiation; and, acting on Cecil's counsel, Elizabeth announced her accession to the Pope. The announcement showed her purpose of making no violent break in the relations of England with the Papal See. But between Elizabeth and the Papacy lay the fatal question of the Divorce. To acknowledge the young Queen was not only to own her mother's marriage, but to cancel the solemn judgement of the Holy See in Catharine's favour

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and its solemn assertion of her own bastardy. The temper of Paul the Fourth took fire at the news. He reproached Elizabeth with her presumption in ascending the throne, recalled the Papal judgement which pronounced her illegitimate, and summoned her to submit her claims to his tribunal. Much of this indignation was no doubt merely diplomatic. If the Pope listened to the claims of Mary Stuart, which were urged on him by the French Court, it was probably only with the purpose of using them to bring pressure to bear on Elizabeth and on the stubborn country which still refused to restore its lands to the Church and to make the complete submission which Paul demanded. But Cecil and the Queen knew that, even had they been willing to pay such a price for the crown, it was beyond their power to bring England to pay it. The form too in which Paul had couched his answer admitted of no compromise. The summons to submit the Queen's claim of succession to the judgement of Rome produced its old effect. Elizabeth was driven, as Henry had been driven, to assert the right of the nation to decide on questions which affected its very life. A Parliament which met in January, 1559, acknowledged the legitimacy of Elizabeth and her title to the crown.

The
Supremacy
re-estab-
lished.

Such an acknowledgement in the teeth of the Papal repudiation of Anne Boleyn's marriage carried with it a repudiation of the supremacy of the Papacy. It was in vain that the clergy in convocation unanimously adopted five articles which affirmed their faith in transubstantiation, their acceptance of the supreme authority of the Popes as "Christ's vicars and supreme rulers of the Church," and their resolve "that the authority in all matters of faith and discipline belongs and ought to belong only to the pastors of the Church, and not to laymen." It was in vain that the bishops unanimously opposed the Bill for restoring the royal supremacy when it was brought before the Lords. The "ancient jurisdiction of the Crown over the Estate ecclesiastical and spiritual" was restored; the Acts which

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under Mary re-established the independent jurisdiction and legislation of the Church were repealed; and the clergy were called on to swear to the supremacy of the Crown and to abjure all foreign authority and jurisdiction. Further Elizabeth had no personal wish to go. A third of the Council and at least two-thirds of the people were as opposed to any radical changes in religion as the Queen. Among the gentry the older and wealthier were on the conservative side, and only the younger and meaner on the other. In the Parliament itself Sir Thomas White protested that "it was unjust that a religion begun in such a miraculous way and established by such grave men should be abolished by a set of beardless boys." Yet even this "beardless" parliament had shown a strong conservatism. The Bill which re-established the royal supremacy met with violent opposition in the Commons, and only passed through Cecil's adroit maneuvering.

But the steps which Elizabeth had taken made it necessary to go further. If the Protestants were the less numerous, they were the abler and the more vigorous party, and the break with Rome threw Elizabeth, whether she would or no, on their support. It was a support that could only be bought by theological concessions, and above all by the surrender of the Mass; for to every Protestant the Mass was identified with the fires of Smithfield, while the Prayer-book which it had displaced was hallowed by the memories of the Martyrs. The pressure of the reforming party indeed would have been fruitless had the Queen still been hampered by danger from France. Fortunately for their cause the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis at this juncture freed Elizabeth's hands. By this treaty, which was practically concluded in March, 1559, Calais was left in French holding on the illusory pledge of its restoration to England eight years later; but peace was secured and the danger of a war of succession, in which Mary Stuart would be backed by the arms of France, for a while averted. Secure from without, Elizabeth

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could venture to buy the support of the Protestants within her realm by the restoration of the English Prayer-book. Such a measure was far indeed from being meant as an open break with Catholicism. The use of the vulgar tongue in public worship was still popular with a large part of the Catholic world; and the Queen did her best by the alterations she made in Edward's Prayer-book to strip it of its more Protestant tone. To the bulk of the people the book must have seemed merely a rendering of the old service in their own tongue. As the English Catholics afterwards represented at Rome when excusing their own use of it, the Prayer-book "contained neither impiety nor false doctrine; its prayers were those of the Catholic Church, altered only so far as to omit the merits and intercession of the saints." On such a concession as this the Queen felt it safe to venture in spite of the stubborn opposition of the spiritual estate. She ordered a disputation to be held in Westminster Abbey before the Houses on the question, and when the disputation ended in the refusal of the bishops to proceed an Act of Uniformity, which was passed in spite of their strenuous opposition, restored at the close of April the last Prayer-book of Edward, and enforced its use on the clergy on pain of deprivation.

Pius the
Fourth.

At Rome the news of these changes stirred a fiercer wrath in Paul the Fourth, and his threats of excommunication were only held in check by the protests of Philip. The policy of the Spanish King still bound him to Elizabeth's cause, for the claims of Mary Stuart had been reserved in the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis, and the refusal of France to abandon them held Spain to its alliance with the Queen. Vexed as he was at the news of the Acts which re-established the supremacy, Philip ordered his ambassador to assure Elizabeth he was as sure a friend as ever, and to soothe the resentment of the English Catholics if it threatened to break out into revolt. He showed the same temper in his protest against action at Rome. Paul

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had however resolved to carry out his threats when his death and the interregnum which followed gave Elizabeth a fresh respite. His successor, Pius the Fourth, was of milder temper and leaned rather to a policy of conciliation. Decisive indeed as the Queen's action may seem in modern eyes, it was far from being held as decisive at the time. The Act of Supremacy might be regarded as having been forced upon Elizabeth by Paul's repudiation of her title to the crown. The alterations which were made by the Queen's authority in the Prayer-book showed a wish to conciliate those who clung to the older faith. It was clear that Elizabeth had no mind merely to restore the system of the Protectorate. She set up again the royal supremacy, but she dropped the words "Head of the Church" from the royal title. The forty-two Articles of Protestant doctrine which Cranmer had drawn up were left in abeyance. If the Queen had had her will, she would have retained the celibacy of the clergy and restored the use of crucifixes in the churches.

The caution and hesitation with which she enforced on the clergy the oath required by the Act of Supremacy showed Elizabeth's wish to avoid the opening of a religious strife. The higher dignitaries indeed were unsparingly dealt with. The bishops, who with a single exception refused to take the oath, were imprisoned and deprived. The same measure was dealt out to most of the archdeacons and deans. But with the mass of the parish priests a very different course was taken. The Commissioners appointed in May 1559 were found to be too zealous in October, and several of the clerical members were replaced by cooler laymen. The great bulk of the clergy seem neither to have refused nor to have consented to the oath, but to have left the Commissioners' summons unheeded and to have stayed quietly at home. Of the nine thousand four hundred beneficed clergy only a tenth presented themselves before the Commissioners. Of those who attended and refused the oath a hundred and eighty-

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nine were deprived, but many of the most prominent went unharmed. At Winchester, though the dean and canons of the cathedral, the warden and fellows of the college, and the master of St. Cross, refused the oath, only four of these appear in the list of deprivations. Even the few who suffered proved too many for the purpose of the Queen. In the more remote parts of the kingdom the proceedings of the visitors threatened to wake the religious strife which she was endeavouring to lull to sleep. On the northern border, where the great nobles, Lord Dacres and the Earls of Cumberland and Westmoreland, were zealous Catholics, and refused to let the bishop "meddle with them," the clergy held stubbornly aloof. At Durham a parson was able to protest without danger that the Pope alone had power in spiritual matters. In Hereford the town turned out to receive in triumph a party of priests from the west who had refused the oath. The University of Oxford took refuge in sullen opposition. In spite of pressure from the Protestant prelates, who occupied the sees vacated by the deprived bishops, Elizabeth was firm in her policy of patience, and in December she ordered the Commissioners in both provinces to suspend their proceedings.

The
Religious
Chaos.

In part indeed of her effort she was foiled by the bitterness of the reformers. The London mob tore down the crosses in the streets. Her attempt to retain the crucifix, or to enforce the celibacy of the priesthood fell dead before the opposition of the Protestant clergy. But to the mass of the nation the compromise of Elizabeth seems to have been fairly acceptable. They saw but little change. Their old vicar or rector in almost every case remained in his parsonage and ministered in his church. The new Prayer-book was for the most part an English rendering of the old service. Even the more zealous adherents of Catholicism held as yet that in complying with the order for attendance at public worship "there could be nothing positively unlawful." Where party feeling ran

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high indeed the matter was sometimes settled by a compromise. A priest would celebrate mass at his parsonage for the more rigid Catholics, and administer the new communion in church to the more rigid Protestants. Sometimes both parties knelt together at the same altar-rails, the one to receive hosts consecrated by the priest at home after the old usage, the other wafers consecrated in Church after the new. In many parishes of the north no change of service was made at all. Even where priest and people conformed it was often with a secret belief that better times were soon to bring back the older observances. As late as 1569 some of the chief parishes in Sussex were still merely bending to the storm of heresy. "In the church of Arundel certain altars do stand yet, to the offence of the godly, which murmur and speak much against the same. In the town of Battle when a preacher doth come and speak anything against the Pope's doctrine they will not abide but get them out of the church. They have yet in the diocese in many places thereof images hidden and other popish ornaments ready to set up the mass again within twenty-four hours warning. In many places they keep yet their chalices, looking to have mass again." Nor was there much new teaching as yet to stir up strife in those who clung to the older faith. Elizabeth had no mind for controversies which would set her people by the ears. "In many churches they have no sermons, not one in seven years, and some not one in twelve." The older priests of Mary's days held their peace. The Protestant preachers were few and hampered by the exaction of licences. In many cases churches had "neither parson, vicar, nor curate, but a sorry reader." Even where the new clergy were of higher intellectual stamp they were often unpopular. Many of those who were set in the place of the displaced clergy roused disgust by their violence and greed. Chapters plundered their own estates by leases and fines and by felling timber. The marriages of the clergy became a scandal, which was increased when

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the gorgeous vestments of the old worship were cut up into gowns and boddices for the priests' wives. The new services sometimes turned into scenes of utter disorder where the ministers wore what dress they pleased and the communicant stood or sate as he liked; while the old altars were broken down and the communion-table was often a bare board upon trestles. Only in the few places where the more zealous of the reformers had settled was there any religious instruction. "In many places," it was reported after ten years of the Queen's rule, "the people cannot yet say their commandments, and in some not the articles of their belief. Naturally enough, the bulk of Englishmen were found to be "utterly devoid of religion," and came to church "as to a May game."

Parker. To modern eyes the Church under Elizabeth would seem little better than a religious chaos. But England was fairly used to religious confusion, for the whole machinery of English religion had been thrown out of gear by the rapid and radical changes of the last two reigns. And to the Queen's mind a religious chaos was a far less difficulty than the parting of the nation into two warring Churches which would have been brought about by a more rigorous policy. She trusted to time to bring about greater order; and she found in Matthew Parker, whom Pole's death at the moment of her accession enabled her to raise to the see of Canterbury, an agent in the reorganization of the Church whose patience and moderation were akin to her own. To the difficulties which Parker found indeed in the temper of the reformers and their opponents new difficulties were sometimes added by the freaks of the Queen herself. If she had no convictions, she had tastes; and her taste revolted from the bareness of Protestant ritual and above all from the marriage of priests. "Leave that alone," she shouted to Dean Nowell from the royal closet as he denounced the use of images—"stick to your text, Master Dean, leave that alone!" When Parker was firm in resisting the

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introduction of the crucifix or of celibacy, Elizabeth showed her resentment by an insult to his wife. Married ladies were addressed at this time as "Madam," unmarried ladies as "Mistress;" but the marriage of the clergy was still unsanctioned by law, for Elizabeth had refused to revive the statute of Edward by which it was allowed, and the position of a priest's wife was legally a very doubtful one. When Mrs. Parker therefore advanced at the close of a sumptuous entertainment at Lambeth to take leave of the Queen, Elizabeth feigned a momentary hesitation. "Madam," she said at last, "I may not call you, and Mistress I am loath to call you; however, I thank you for your good cheer." But freaks of this sort had little real weight beside the steady support which the Queen gave to the Primate in his work of order. The vacant sees were filled with men from among the exiles, for the most part learned and able, though far more Protestant than the bulk of their flocks; the plunder of the Church by the nobles was checked; and at the close of 1559 England seemed to settle quietly down in a religious peace.

But cautious as had been Elizabeth's movements and skilfully as she had hidden the real drift of her measures from the bulk of the people, the religion of England was changed. The old service was gone. The old bishops were gone. The royal supremacy was again restored. All connexion with Rome was again broken. The repudiation of the Papacy and the restoration of the Prayer-book in the teeth of the unanimous opposition of the priesthood had established the great principle of the Reformation, that the form of a nation's faith should be determined not by the clergy but by the nation itself. Different therefore as was the temper of the government, the religious attitude of England was once more what it had been under the Protectorate. At the most critical moment of the strife between the new religion and the old England had ranged itself on the side of Protestantism. It was only the later

England
Protestant.

CHAP. III. history of Elizabeth's reign which was to reveal of what
 The mightly import this Protestantism of England was to
 England of prove. Had England remained Catholic the freedom of
 Elizabeth. the Dutch Republic would have been impossible. No
 1558- Henry the Fourth would have reigned in France to save
 1561. French Protestantism by the Edict of Nantes. No
 struggle over far-off seas would have broken the power
 of Spain and baffled the hopes which the House of
 Austria cherished of winning a mastery over the western
 world. Nor could Calvinism have found a home across
 the northern border. The first result of the religious
 change in England was to give a new impulse to the
 religious revolution in Scotland.

*Scotch
 Calvinism.*

In the midst of anxieties at home Elizabeth had been keenly watching the fortunes of the north. We have seen how the policy of Mary of Guise had given life and force to the Scottish Reformation. Not only had the Regent given shelter to the exiled Protestants and looked on at the diffusion of the new doctrines, but her "fair words" had raised hopes that the government itself would join the ranks of the reformers. Mary of Guise had regarded the religious movement in a purely political light. It was as enemies of Mary Tudor that she gave shelter to the exiles, and it was to avoid a national strife which would have left Scotland open to English attack in the war which closed Mary's reign that the Regent gave "fair words" to the preachers. But with the first Covenant, with the appearance of the Lords of the Congregation in an avowed league in the heart of the land, with their rejection of the state worship and their resolve to enforce a change of religion, her attitude suddenly altered. To the Regent the new religion was henceforth but a garb under which the old quarrel of the nobles was breaking out anew against the Crown. Smooth as were her words, men knew that Mary of Guise was resolute to withstand religious change. But Elizabeth's elevation to the throne gave a new fire to the reformers. Conservative as her earlier policy

seemed, the instinct of the Protestants told them that the new queen's accession was a triumph for Protestantism. The Lords at once demanded that all bishops should be chosen by the nobles and gentry, each priest by his parish, and that divine service should be henceforth in the vulgar tongue. These demands were rejected by the bishops, while the royal court in May 1559 summoned the preachers to its bar and on their refusal to appear condemned them to banishment as rebels. The sentence was a signal for open strife. The Protestants, whose strength as yet lay mainly in Fife, had gathered in great numbers at Perth, and the news stirred them to an outbreak of fury. The images were torn down from the churches, the monasteries of the town were sacked and demolished. The riot at Perth was followed by a general rising. The work of destruction went on along the east coast and through the Lowlands, while the "Congregation" sprang up everywhere in its train. The Mass came to an end. The Prayer-book of Edward was heard in the churches. The lords occupied the capital and found its burghers as zealous in the cause of reformation as themselves. Throughout all these movements the Lords had been in communication with England, for the old jealousy of English annexation was now lost in a jealousy of French conquest. Their jealousy had solid grounds. The marriage of Mary Stuart with the Dauphin of France had been celebrated in April 1558 and three days before the wedding the girl-queen had been brought to convey her kingdom away by deed to the House of Valois. The deed was kept secret; but Mary's demand of the crown matrimonial for her husband roused suspicions. It was known that the government of Scotland was discussed at the French council-board, and whispers came of a suggestion that the kingdom should be turned into an appanage for a younger son of the French King. Meanwhile French money was sent to the Regent, a body of French troops served as her body-guard, and on the advance of

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Against these schemes on the French Court the Scotch Lords saw no aid save in Elizabeth. Their aim was to drive the Frenchmen out of Scotland; and this could only be done by help both in money and men from England. Nor was the English Council slow to promise help. To Elizabeth indeed the need of supporting rebels against their sovereign was a bitter one. The need of establishing a Calvinistic Church on her frontier was yet bitterer. It was not a material force which upheld the fabric of the monarchy, as it had been built up by the Houses of York and of Tudor, but a moral force. England held that safety against anarchy within and against attacks on the national independence from without was to be found in the Crown alone, and that obedience to the Crown was the first element of national order and national greatness. In their religious reforms the Tudor sovereigns had aimed at giving a religious sanction to the power which sprang from this general conviction, and at hallowing their secular supremacy by blending with it their supremacy over the Church. Against such a theory, either of Church or State, Calvinism was an emphatic protest, and in aiding Calvinism to establish itself in Scotland the Queen felt that she was dealing a heavy blow to her political and religious system at home. But struggle as she might against the necessity, she had no choice but to submit. The assumption by Francis and Mary of the style of King and Queen of England, the express reservation of this claim, even in the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis, made a French occupation of Scotland a matter of life and death to the kingdom over the border. The English Council believed "that the French mean, after their forces are brought into Scotland, first to conquer it,—which will be neither hard nor long—and next that they and the Scots will invade this realm." They were soon pressed to decide on their course. The Regent used her money to

good purpose, and at the approach of her forces the Lords withdrew from Edinburgh to the west. At the end of August two thousand French soldiers landed at Leith, as the advance guard of the promised forces, and entrenched themselves strongly. It was in vain that the Lords again appeared in the field, demanded the withdrawal of the foreigners, and threatened Mary of Guise that as she would no longer hold them for her counsellors "we also will no longer acknowledge you as our Regent." They were ordered to disperse as traitors, beaten off from the fortifications of Leith, and attacked by the French troops in Fife itself.

The Lords called loudly for aid from the English Queen. To give such assistance would have seemed impossible but twelve months back. But the appeal of the Scots found a different England from that which had met Elizabeth on her accession. The Queen's diplomacy had gained her a year, and her matchless activity had used the year to good purpose. Order was restored throughout England, the Church was re-organized, the debts of the Crown were in part paid off, the treasury was recruited, a navy created, and a force made ready for action in the north. Neither religiously nor politically indeed had Elizabeth any sympathy with the Scotch Lords. Knox was to her simply a firebrand of rebellion; her political instinct shrank from the Scotch Calvinism with its protest against the whole English system of government, whether in Church or State; and as a Queen she hated revolt. But the danger forced her hand. Elizabeth was ready to act, and to act even in the defiance of France. As yet she stood almost alone in her self-reliance. Spain believed her ruin to be certain. Her challenge would bring war with France, and in a war with France the Spanish statesmen held that only their master's intervention could save her. "For our own sake," said one of Philip's ministers, "we must take as much care of England as of the Low Countries."

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But that such a care would be needed Grenville never doubted; and Philip's councillors solemnly debated whether it might not be well to avoid the risk of a European struggle by landing the six thousand men whom Philip was now withdrawing from the Netherlands on the English shore, and coercing Elizabeth into quietness. France meanwhile despised her chances. Her very Council was in despair. The one minister in whom she dared to confide throughout these Scotch negotiations was Cecil, the youngest and boldest of her advisers, and even Cecil trembled for her success. The Duke of Norfolk refused at first to take command of the force destined as he held for a desperate enterprize. Arundel, the leading peer among the Catholics, denounced the supporters of a Scottish war as traitors. But lies and hesitation were no sooner put aside than the Queen's vigour and tenacity came fairly into play. In January, 1560, at a moment when D'Oysel, the French commander, was on the point of crushing the Lords of the Congregation, an English fleet appeared suddenly in the Forth and forced the Regent's army to fall back upon Leith.

The
Huguenot
rising.

Here however it again made an easy stand against the Protestant attacks, and at the close of February the Queen was driven to make a formal treaty with the Lords by which she promised to assist them in the expulsion of the strangers. The treaty was a bold defiance of the power from whom Elizabeth had been glad to buy peace only a year before, even by the sacrifice of Calais. But the Queen had little fear of a counter-blow from France. The Reformation was fighting for her on the one side of the sea as on the other. From the outset of her reign the rapid growth of the Huguenots in France had been threatening a strife between the old religion and the new. It was to gird himself for such a struggle that Henry the Second concluded the treaty of Câteau Cambrésis; and though Henry's projects were foiled by his death, the Duke of Guise, who ruled his successor, Francis the Second,

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pressed on yet more bitterly the work of persecution. It was believed that he had sworn to exterminate "those of the religion." But the Huguenots were in no mood to bear extermination. Their Protestantism, like that of the Scots, was the Protestantism of Calvin. As they grew in numbers, their churches formed themselves on the model of Geneva, and furnished in their synods and assemblies a political as well as a religious organization; while the doctrine of resistance even to kings, if kings showed themselves enemies to God, found ready hearers, whether among the turbulent French *noblesse*, or among the traders of the towns who were stirred to new dreams of constitutional freedom. Theories of liberty or of resistance to the crown were as abhorrent to Elizabeth as to the Guises, but again necessity swept her into the current of Calvinism. She was forced to seize on the religious disaffection of France as a check on the dreams of aggression which Francis and Mary had shown in assuming the style of English Sovereigns. The English ambassador, Throckmorton, fed the alarms of the Huguenots and pressed them to take up arms. It is probable that the Huguenot plot which broke out in the March of 1560 in an attempt to surprize the French Court at Amboise was known beforehand by Cecil; and, though the conspiracy was ruthlessly suppressed, the Queen drew fresh courage from a sense that the Guises had henceforth work for their troops at home.

At the end of March therefore Lord Grey pushed over the border with 8,000 men to join the Lords of the Congregation in the siege of Leith. The Scots gave little aid; and an assault on the town signally failed. Philip too in a sudden jealousy of Elizabeth's growing strength demanded the abandonment of the enterprize, and offered to warrant England against any attack from the north if its forces were withdrawn. But eager as Elizabeth was to preserve Philip's alliance, she preferred to be her own security. She knew that the Spanish King could not

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abandon her while Mary Stuart was Queen of France, and that at the moment of his remonstrances Philip was menacing the Guises with war if they carried out their project of bringing about a Catholic rising by a descent on the English coast. Nor were the threats of the French Court more formidable. The bloody repression of the conspiracy of Amboise had only fired the temper of the Huguenots; southern and western France were on the verge of revolt; the House of Bourbon had adopted the reformed faith, and put itself at the head of the Protestant movement. In the face of dangers such as these the Guises could send to Leith neither money nor men. Elizabeth therefore remained immovable while famine did its work on the town. At the crisis of the siege the death of Mary of Guise threw the direct rule over Scotland into the hands of Francis and Mary Stuart; and the exhaustion of the garrison forced the two sovereigns to purchase its liberation by two treaties which their envoys concluded at Edinburgh in June 1560. That with the Scotch pledged them to withdraw for ever the French from the realm, and left the government of Scotland to a Council of the Lords. The treaty with England was a more difficult matter. Francis and Mary had forbidden their envoys to sign any engagement with Elizabeth as to the Scottish realm, or to consent to any abandonment of their claims on the royal style of England. It was only after long debate that Cecil wrested from them the acknowledgment that the realms of England and Ireland of right appertained to Elizabeth, and a vague clause by which the French sovereigns promised the English Queen that they would fulfil their pledges to the Scots.

Elizabeth's
character.

Stubborn however as was the resistance of the French envoys the signature of the treaty proclaimed Elizabeth's success. The issue of the Scotch war revealed suddenly to Europe the vigour of the Queen and the strength of her throne. What her ability really was no one, save Cecil, had as yet suspected. There was little indeed in

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her outward demeanour to give any indication of her greatness. To the world about her the temper of Elizabeth recalled in its strange contrasts the mixed blood within her veins. She was at once the daughter of Henry and of Anne Boleyn. From her father she inherited her frank and hearty address, her love of popularity and of free intercourse with the people, her dauntless courage and her amazing self-confidence. Her harsh, manlike voice, her impetuous will, her pride, her furious outbursts of anger came to her with her Tudor blood. She rated great nobles as if they were schoolboys; she met the insolence of Lord Essex with a box on the ear; she broke now and then into the gravest deliberations to swear at her ministers like a fishwife. Strangely in contrast with these violent outlines of her father's temper stood the sensuous, self-indulgent nature she drew from Anne Boleyn. Splendour and pleasure were with Elizabeth the very air she breathed. Her delight was to move in perpetual progresses from castle to castle through a series of gorgeous pageants, fanciful and extravagant as a caliph's dream. She loved gaiety and laughter and wit. A happy retort or a finished compliment never failed to win her favour. She hoarded jewels. Her dresses were innumerable. Her vanity remained, even to old age, the vanity of a coquette in her teens. No adulation was too fulsome for her, no flattery of her beauty too gross. She would play with her rings that her courtiers might note the delicacy of her hands; or dance a coranto that an ambassador, hidden dexterously behind a curtain, might report her sprightliness to his master. Her levity, her frivolous laughter, her unwomanly jests gave colour to a thousand scandals. Her character in fact, like her portraits, was utterly without shade. Of womanly reserve or self-restraint she knew nothing. No instinct of delicacy veiled the voluptuous temper which broke out in the romps of her girlhood and showed itself almost ostentatiously through her later life. Personal beauty in a man was a sure passport to her liking. She

CHAP. III. patted handsome young squires on the neck when they knelt to kiss her hand, and fondled her "sweet Robin," Lord Leicester, in the face of the Court.

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It was no wonder that the statesmen whom she outwitted held Elizabeth to be little more than a frivolous woman, or that Philip of Spain wondered how "a wanton" could hold in check the policy of the Escorial. But the Elizabeth whom they saw was far from being all of Elizabeth. Wilfulness and triviality played over the surface of a nature hard as steel, a temper purely intellectual, the very type of reason untouched by imagination or passion. Luxurious and pleasure-loving as she seemed, the young Queen lived simply and frugally, and she worked hard. Her vanity and caprice had no weight whatever with her in state affairs. The coquette of the presence-chamber became the coolest and hardest of politicians at the council-board. Fresh from the flattery of her courtiers, she would tolerate no flattery in the closet; she was herself plain and downright of speech with her counsellors, and she looked for a corresponding plainness of speech in return. The very choice of her advisers indeed showed Elizabeth's ability. She had a quick eye for merit of any sort, and a wonderful power of enlisting its whole energy in her service. The sagacity which chose Cecil and Walsingham was just as unerring in its choice of the meanest of her agents. Her success indeed in securing from the beginning of her reign to its end, with the single exception of Leicester, precisely the right men for the work she set them to do sprang in great measure from the noblest characteristic of her intellect. If in loftiness of aim the Queen's temper fell below many of the tempers of her time, in the breadth of its range, in the universality of its sympathy it stood far above them all. Elizabeth could talk poetry with Spenser and philosophy with Bruno; she could discuss Euphuism with Lilly, and enjoy the chivalry of Essex; she could turn from talk of the last fashions to pore with Cecil over despatches and

treasury books; she could pass from tracking traitors with Walsingham to settle points of doctrine with Parker, or to calculate with Frobisher the chances of a north-west passage to the Indies. The versatility and many-sidedness of her mind enabled her to understand every phase of the intellectual movement about her, and to fix by a sort of instinct on its higher representatives.

It was only on its intellectual side indeed that Elizabeth touched the England of her day. All its moral aspects were simply dead to her. It was a time when men were being lifted into nobleness by the new moral energy which seemed suddenly to pulse through the whole people, when honour and enthusiasm took colours of poetic beauty, and religion became a chivalry. But the finer sentiments of the men about her touched Elizabeth simply as the fair tints of a picture would have touched her. She made her market with equal indifference out of the heroism of William of Orange or the bigotry of Philip. The noblest aims and lives were only counters on her board. She was the one soul in her realm whom the news of St. Bartholomew stirred to no thirst for vengeance; and while England was thrilling with the triumph over the Armada, its Queen was coolly grumbling over the cost, and making her profit out of the spoiled provisions she had ordered for the fleet that saved her. No womanly sympathy bound her even to those who stood closest to her life. She loved Leicester indeed; she was grateful to Cecil. But for the most part she was deaf to the voices either of love or gratitude. She accepted such services as were never rendered to any other English sovereign without a thought of return. Walsingham spent his fortune in saving her life and her throne, and she left him to die a beggar. But, as if by a strange irony, it was to this very lack of womanly sympathy that she owed some of the grandest features of her character. If she was without love she was without hate. She cherished no petty resentments; she never stooped to envy or suspicion of the men

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who served her. She was indifferent to abuse. Her good humour was never ruffled by the charges of wantonness and cruelty with which the Jesuits filled every Court in Europe. She was insensible to fear. Her life became at last a mark for assassin after assassin, but the thought of peril was the thought hardest to bring home to her. Even when Catholic plots broke out in her very household she would listen to no proposals for the removal of Catholics from her court.

If any trace of her sex lingered in the Queen's actual statesmanship, it was seen in the simplicity and tenacity of purpose that often underlies a woman's fluctuations of feeling. It was the directness and steadiness of her aims which gave her her marked superiority over the statesmen of her time. No nobler group of ministers ever gathered round a council-board than those who gathered round the council-board of Elizabeth. But she was the instrument of none. She listened, she weighed, she used or put by the counsels of each in turn, but her policy as a whole was her own. It was a policy, not of genius, but of good sense. Her aims were simple and obvious: to preserve her throne, to keep England out of war, to restore civil and religious order. Something of womanly caution and timidity perhaps backed the passionless indifference with which she set aside the larger schemes of ambition which were ever opening before her eyes. In later days she was resolute in her refusal of the Low Countries. She rejected with a laugh the offers of the Protestants to make her "head of the religion" and "mistress of the seas." But her amazing success in the end sprang mainly from this wise limitation of her aims. She had a finer sense than any of her counsellors of her real resources; she knew instinctively how far she could go and what she could do. Her cold, critical intellect was never swayed by enthusiasm or by panic either to exaggerate or to under-estimate her risks or her power. Of political wisdom indeed in its larger and more generous sense

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Elizabeth had little or none; but her political tact was unerring. She seldom saw her course at a glance, but she played with a hundred courses, fitfully and discursively, as a musician runs his fingers over the key-board, till she hit suddenly upon the right one. Her nature was essentially practical and of the present. She distrusted a plan in fact just in proportion to its speculative range or its outlook into the future. Her notion of statesmanship lay in watching how things turned out around her, and in seizing the moment for making the best of them.

Such a policy as this, limited, practical, tentative as it always was, had little of grandeur and originality about it; it was apt indeed to degenerate into mere trickery and finesse. But it was a policy suited to the England of her day, to its small resources and the transitional character of its religious and political belief, and it was eminently suited to Elizabeth's peculiar powers. It was a policy of detail, and in details her wonderful readiness and ingenuity found scope for their exercise. "No War, my Lords," the Queen used to cry imperiously at the council-board, "No War!" but her hatred of war sprang not so much from aversion to blood or to expense, real as was her aversion to both, as from the fact that peace left the field open to the diplomatic manoeuvres and intrigues in which she excelled. Her delight in the consciousness of her ingenuity broke out in a thousand puckish freaks, freaks in which one can hardly see any purpose beyond the purpose of sheer mystification. She revelled in "bye-ways" and "crooked ways." She played with grave cabinets as a cat plays with a mouse, and with much of the same feline delight in the mere embarrassment of her victims. When she was weary of mystifying foreign statesmen she turned to find fresh sport in mystifying her own ministers. Had Elizabeth written the story of her reign she would have prided herself, not on the triumph of England or the ruin of Spain, but on the skill with which she had hoodwinked and outwitted every statesman in Europe during fifty years.

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Nothing is more revolting, but nothing is more characteristic of the Queen than her shameless mendacity. It was an age of political lying, but in the profusion and recklessness of her lies Elizabeth stood without a peer in Christendom. A falsehood was to her simply an intellectual means of meeting a difficulty; and the ease with which she asserted or denied whatever suited her purpose was only equalled by the cynical indifference with which she met the exposure of her lies as soon as their purpose was answered. Her trickery in fact had its political value. Ignoble and wearisome as the Queen's diplomacy seems to us now, tracking it as we do through a thousand despatches, it succeeded in its main end, for it gained time, and every year that was gained doubled Elizabeth's strength. She made as dexterous a use of the foibles of her temper. Her levity carried her gaily over moments of detection and embarrassment where better women would have died of shame. She screened her tentative and hesitating statesmanship under the natural timidity and vacillation of her sex. She turned her very luxury and sports to good account. There were moments of grave danger in her reign when the country remained indifferent to its perils, as it saw the Queen give her days to hawking and hunting, and her nights to dancing and plays. Her vanity and affectation, her womanly fickleness and caprice, all had their part in the diplomatic comedies she played with the successive candidates for her hand. If political necessities made her life a lonely one, she had at any rate the satisfaction of averting war and conspiracies by love sonnets and romantic interviews, or of gaining a year of tranquillity by the dexterous spinning out of a flirtation.

As we track Elizabeth through her tortuous mazes of lying and intrigue, the sense of her greatness is almost lost in a sense of contempt. But wrapped as they were in a cloud of mystery, the aims of her policy were throughout temperate and simple, and they were pursued with a rare tenacity. The sudden acts of energy which from

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time to time broke her habitual hesitation proved that it was no hesitation of weakness. Elizabeth could wait and finesse; but when the hour was come she could strike, and strike hard. Her natural temper indeed tended to a rash self-confidence rather than to self-distrust. "I have the heart of a King," she cried at a moment of utter peril, and it was with a kingly unconsciousness of the dangers about her that she fronted them for fifty years. She had, as strong natures always have, an unbounded confidence in her luck. "Her Majesty counts much on Fortune," Walsingham wrote bitterly; "I wish she would trust more in Almighty God." The diplomatists who censured at one moment her irresolution, her delay, her changes of front, censure at the next her "obstinacy," her iron will, her defiance of what seemed to them inevitable ruin. "This woman," Philip's envoy wrote after a wasted remonstrance, "this woman is possessed by a hundred thousand devils." To her own subjects, who knew nothing of her manoeuvres and flirtations, of her "bye-ways" and "crooked ways," she seemed the embodiment of dauntless resolution. Brave as they were, the men who swept the Spanish Main or glided between the icebergs of Baffin's Bay never doubted that the palm of bravery lay with their Queen.

It was this dauntless courage which backed Elizabeth's good luck in the Scottish war. The issue of the war wholly changed her position at home and abroad. Not only had she liberated herself from the control of Philip and successfully defied the threats of the Guises, but at a single blow she had freed England from what had been its sorest danger for two hundred years. She had broken the dependence of Scotland upon France. That perpetual peace between England and the Scots which the policy of the Tudors had steadily aimed at was at last sworn in the Treaty of Edinburgh. If the Queen had not bound to her all Scotland, she had bound to her the strongest and most vigorous party among the nobles of the north. The Lords of the Congregation promised to be

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of Medicis.*

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obedient to Elizabeth in all such matters as might not lead to the overthrow of their country's rights or of Scottish liberties. They were bound to her not only by the war but by the events that followed the war. A Parliament at Edinburgh accepted the Calvinistic confession of Geneva as the religion of Scotland, abolished the temporal jurisdiction of the bishops, and prohibited the celebration of the Mass. The Act and the Treaty were alike presented for confirmation to Francis and Mary. They were roughly put aside, for the French King would give no sanction to a successful revolt, and Mary had no mind to waive her claim to the English throne. But from action the two sovereigns were held back by the troubles in France. It was in vain that the Guises strove to restore political and religious unity by an assembly of the French notables: the notables met only to receive a demand for freedom of worship from the Huguenots of the west, and to force the Government to promise a national council for the settlement of the religious disputes as well as a gathering of the States-General. The counsellors of Francis resolved to anticipate this meeting by a sudden stroke at the heretics; and as a preliminary step the chiefs of the House of Bourbon were seized at the court and the Prince of Condé threatened with death. The success of this measure roused anew the wrath of the young King at the demands of the Scots, and at the close of 1560 Francis was again nursing plans of vengeance on the Lords of the Congregation. But Elizabeth's good fortune still proved true to her. The projects of the Guises were suddenly foiled by the young King's death. The power of Mary Stuart and her kindred came to an end, for the childhood of Charles the Ninth gave the regency over France to the Queen-mother, Catharine of Medicis, and the policy of Catharine secured England and Scotland alike from danger of attack. Her temper, like that of Elizabeth, was a purely political temper; her aim was to balance Catholics against Protestants to the

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profit of the throne. She needed peace abroad to preserve this political and religious balance at home, and though she made some fruitless efforts to renew the old friendship with Scotland, she had no mind to intrigue like the Guises with the English Catholics nor to back Mary Stuart's pretensions to the English throne.

With Scotland as an ally and with France at peace Elizabeth's throne at last seemed secure. The outbreak of the strife between the Old Faith and the New indeed, if it gave the Queen safety abroad, somewhat weakened her at home. The sense of a religious change which her caution had done so much to disguise broke slowly on England as it saw the Queen allying herself with Scotch Calvinists and French Huguenots; and the compromise she had hoped to establish in matters of worship became hourly less possible as the more earnest Catholics discerned the Protestant drift of Elizabeth's policy. But Philip still held them back from any open resistance. There was much indeed to move him from his old support of the Queen. The widowhood of Mary Stuart freed him from his dread of a permanent annexation of Scotland by France as well as of a French annexation of England, while the need of holding England as a check on French hostility to the House of Austria grew weaker as the outbreak of civil war between the Guises and their opponents rendered French hostility less possible. Elizabeth's support of the Huguenots drove the Spanish King to a burst of passion. A Protestant France not only outraged his religious bigotry, but, as he justly feared, it would give an impulse to heresy throughout his possessions in the Netherlands which would make it hard to keep his hold upon them. Philip noted that the success of the Scotch Calvinists had been followed by the revolt of the Calvinists in France. He could hardly doubt that the success of the French Huguenots would be followed by a rising of the Calvinists in the Low Countries. "Religion" he told Elizabeth angrily "was being made a cloak for anarchy

*Philip's
policy.*

CHAP. III. and revolution." But vexed as Philip was with her course
 The both abroad and at home, he was still far from withdrawing
 England of his support from Elizabeth. Even now he could not look
 Elizabeth. upon the Queen as lost to Catholicism. He knew how her
 1558- course both at home and abroad had been forced on her
 1561. not by religious enthusiasm but by political necessity, and
 he still "trusted that ere long God would give us either a
 general council or a good Pope who would correct abuses
 and then all would go well. That God would allow so
 noble and Christian a realm as England to break away
 from Christendom and run the risk of perdition he could
 not believe."

*Pius the
Fourth.*

What was needed, Philip thought, was a change of
 policy in the Papacy. The bigotry of Paul the Fourth
 had driven England from the obedience of the Roman
 see. The gentler policy of Pius the Fourth might yet
 restore her to it. Pius was as averse from any break
 with Elizabeth as Philip was. He censured bitterly the
 harshness of his predecessor. The loss of Scotland and
 the threatened loss of France he laid to the charge of
 the wars which Paul had stirred up against Philip and
 which had opened a way for the spread of Calvinism
 in both kingdoms. England, he held, could have been
 easily preserved for Catholicism but for Paul's rejection
 of the conciliatory efforts of Pole. When he ascended
 the Papal throne at the end of 1559 indeed the acces-
 sion of England to the Reformation seemed complete.
 The royal supremacy was re-established: the Mass abo-
 lished: the English Liturgy restored. A new episcopate,
 drawn from the Calvinistic refugees, was being gathered
 round Matthew Parker. But Pius would not despair.
 He saw no reason why England should not again be
 Catholic. He knew that the bulk of its people clung
 to the older religion, if they clung also to independence
 of the Papal jurisdiction and to the secularization of
 the Abbey-lands. The Queen, as he believed, had been
 ready for a compromise at her accession, and he was

ready to make terms with her now. In the spring of CHAP. III.
 1560 therefore he despatched Parpaglia, a follower of The
 Pole, to open negotiations with Elizabeth. The moment England of
 Elizabeth. which the Pope had chosen was a critical one for the
 1558- Queen. She was in the midst of the Scotch war, and
 1561. her forces had just been repulsed in an attempt to storm
 the walls of Leith. Such a repulse woke fears of conspiracy
 among the Catholic nobles of the northern border, and a
 refusal to receive the legate would have driven them to
 an open rising. On the other hand the reception of
 Parpaglia would have alienated the Protestants, shaken
 the trust of the Lords of the Congregation in the Queen's
 support, and driven them to make terms with Francis and
 Mary. In either case Scotland fell again under the rule of
 France, and the throne of Elizabeth was placed in greater
 peril than ever. So great was the Queen's embarrassment
 that she availed herself of Cecil's absence in the north to
 hold out hopes of the legate's admission to the realm and
 her own reconciliation with the Papacy. But she was
 freed from these difficulties by the resolute intervention of
 Philip. If he disapproved of her policy in Scotland he
 had no mind that Scotland should become wholly French
 or Elizabeth be really shaken on her throne. He ordered
 the legate therefore to be detained in Flanders till his
 threats had obtained from the Pope an order for his recall.

But Pius was far from abandoning his hopes. After ten
 years suspension he had again summoned the Council of
 Trent. The cry for Church reform, the threat of national
 synods in Spain and in France, forced this measure on
 the Pope; and Pius availed himself of the assembly of the
 Council to make a fresh attempt to turn the tide of the
 Reformation and to win back the Protestant Churches to
 Catholicism. He called therefore on the Lutheran princes of
 Germany to send doctors to the Council, and in May 1561,
 eight months after Parpaglia's failure, despatched a fresh
 nuncio, Martinengo, to invite Elizabeth to send ambassadors
 to Trent. Philip pressed for the nuncio's admission to the

*The
Council of
Trent.*

CHAP. III. realm. His hopes of the Queen's return to the faith were now being fed by a new marriage-negotiation; for on the withdrawal of the Archduke of Austria in sheer weariness of Elizabeth's treachery, she had encouraged her old play-fellow, Lord Robert Dudley, to hope for her hand and to amuse Philip by pledges of bringing back "the religion," should the help of the Spanish king enable him to win it. Philip gave his help, but Dudley remained a suitor, and the hopes of a Catholic revolution became fainter than ever. The Queen would suffer no landing of a legate in her realm. The invitation to the Council fared no better. The Lutheran states of North Germany had already refused to attend. The Council, they held, was no longer a council of reunion. In its earlier session it had formally condemned the very doctrine on which Protestantism was based; and to join it now would simply be to undo all that Luther had done. Elizabeth showed as little hesitation. The hour of her triumph, when a Calvinistic Scotland and a Calvinistic France proved the mainstays of her policy, was no hour of submission to the Papacy. In spite of Philip's entreaties she refused to send envoys to what was not "a free Christian Council." The refusal was decisive in marking Elizabeth's position. The long period of hesitation, of drift, was over. All chance of submission to the Papacy was at an end. In joining the Lutheran states in their rejection of this Council, England had definitely ranged itself on the side of the Reformation.

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CHAPTER IV.

ENGLAND AND MARY STUART.

1561—1567.

WHAT had hitherto kept the bulk of Elizabeth's subjects from opposition to her religious system was a disbelief in its permanence. Englishmen had seen English religion changed too often to believe that it would change no more. When the Commissioners forced a Protestant ritual on St. John's College at Oxford, its founder, Sir Thomas White, simply took away its vestments and crucifixes, and hid them in his house for the better times that every zealous Catholic trusted would have their turn. They believed that a Catholic marriage would at once bring such a turn about; and if Elizabeth dismissed the offer of Philip's hand she played long and assiduously with that of a son of the Emperor, an archduke of the same Austrian house. But the alliance with the Scotch heretics proved a rough blow to this trust: and after the repulse at Leith there were whispers that the two great Catholic nobles of the border, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, were only waiting for the failure of the Scotch enterprize to rise on behalf of the older faith. Whatever their projects were, they were crushed by the Queen's success. With the Lords of the Congregation masters across the border the northern Earls lay helpless between the two Protestant realms. In the mass of men loyalty was still too strong for any dream of revolt; but there was

The
English
Catholics.

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Mary Stuart. The Catholic disaffection which the Queen was henceforth to regard as her greatest danger was thus growing into life when in August 1561, but a few months after the Queen's refusal to acknowledge the Council, Mary Stuart landed at Leith. Girl as she was, and she was only nineteen, Mary was hardly inferior in intellectual power to Elizabeth herself, while in fire and grace and brilliancy of temper she stood high above her. She brought with her the voluptuous refinement of the French Renaissance; she would lounge for days in bed, and rise only at night for dances and music. But her frame was of iron, and incapable of fatigue; she galloped ninety miles after her last defeat without a pause save to change horses. She loved risk and adventure and the ring of arms; as she rode in a foray to the north the swordsmen beside her heard her wish she was a man "to know what life it was to lie all night in the fields, or to walk on the cawsey with a jack and knapschalle, a Glasgow buckler and a broadsword." But in the closet she was as cool and astute a politician as Elizabeth herself; with plans as subtle, and of a far wider and bolder range than the Queen's. "Whatever policy is in all the chief and best practised heads of France," wrote an English envoy, "whatever craft, falsehood, and deceit is in all the subtle brains of Scotland, is either fresh in this woman's memory, or she can fetch it out with a wet finger." Her beauty, her exquisite grace of manner, her generosity of temper and warmth of affection,

her frankness of speech, her sensibility, her gaiety, her womanly tears, her manlike courage, the play and freedom of her nature, the flashes of poetry that broke from her at every intense moment of her life, flung a spell over friend or foe which has only deepened with the lapse of years. Even to Knollys, the sternest Puritan of his day, she seemed in her later captivity to be "a notable woman." "She seemeth to regard no ceremonious honour besides the acknowledgement of her estate royal. She showeth a disposition to speak much, to be bold, to be pleasant, to be very familiar. She showeth a great desire to be avenged on her enemies. She showeth a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory. She desireth much to hear of hardiness and valiancy, commending by name all approved hardy men of her country though they be her enemies, and she concealeth no cowardice even in her friends."

Of the stern bigotry, the intensity of passion, which lay beneath the winning surface of Mary's womanhood, men as yet knew nothing. But they at once recognized her political ability. Till now she had proved in her own despite a powerful friend to the Reformation. It was her claim of the English crown which had seated Elizabeth on the throne, had thrown her on the support of the Protestants, and had secured to the Queen in the midst of her religious changes the protection of Philip of Spain. It was the dread of Mary's ambition which had forced Elizabeth to back the Lords of the Congregation, and the dread of her husband's ambition which had driven Scotland to throw aside its jealousy of England and ally itself with the Queen. But with the death of Francis Mary's position had wholly changed. She had no longer the means of carrying out her husband's threats of crushing the Lords of the Congregation by force of arms. The forces of France were in the hands of Catharine of Medicis; and Catharine was parted from her both by her dread of the Guises and by a personal hate. Yet the attitude of the

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lords became every day more threatening. They were pressing Elizabeth to marry the Earl of Arran, a chief of the house of Hamilton and near heir to the throne, a marriage which pointed to the complete exclusion of Mary from her realm. Even when this project failed, they rejected with stern defiance the young Queen's proposal of restoring the old religion as a condition of her return. If they invited her to Scotland, it was in the name of the Parliament which had set up Calvinism as the law of the land. Bitter as such terms must have been Mary had no choice but to submit to them. To accept the offer of the Catholic lords of Northern Scotland with the Earl of Huntly at their head, who proposed to welcome her in arms as a champion of Catholicism, was to risk a desperate civil war, a war which would in any case defeat a project far dearer to her than her plans for winning Scotland, the project she was nursing of winning the English realm. In the first months of her widowhood therefore her whole attitude was reversed. She received the leader of the Protestant Lords, her half brother, Lord James Stuart, at her court. She showed her favour to him by creating him Earl of Murray. She adopted his policy of accepting the religious changes in Scotland and of bringing Elizabeth by friendly pressure to acknowledge her right, not of reigning in her stead, but of following her on the throne. But while thus in form adopting Murray's policy, Mary at heart was resolute to carry out her own policy too. If she must win the Scots by submitting to a Protestant system in Scotland, she would rally round her the English Catholics by remaining a Catholic herself. If she ceased to call herself Queen of England and only pressed for her acknowledgement as rightful successor to Elizabeth, she would not formally abandon her claim to reign as rightful Queen in Elizabeth's stead. Above all she would give her compliance with Murray's counsels no legal air. No pressure either from her brother or from Elizabeth could bring the young Queen to give her royal confirmation to the

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Parliamentary Acts which established the new religion in Scotland, or her signature to the Treaty of Edinburgh. In spite of her habitual caution the bold words which broke from Mary Stuart on Elizabeth's refusal of a safe conduct betrayed her hopes. "I came to France in spite of her brother's opposition," she said, "and I will return in spite of her own. She has combined with rebel subjects of mine: but there are rebel subjects in England too who would gladly listen to a call from me. I am a queen as well as she, and not altogether friendless. And perhaps I have as great a soul too!"

She saw indeed the new strength which was given her by her husband's death. Her cause was no longer hampered, either in Scotland or in England, by a national jealousy of French interference. It was with a resolve to break the league between Elizabeth and the Scotch Protestants, to unite her own realm around her, and thus to give a firm base for her intrigues among the English Catholics, that Mary Stuart landed at Leith. The effect of her presence was marvellous. Her personal fascination revived the national loyalty, and swept all Scotland to her feet. Knox, the greatest and sternest of the Calvinistic preachers, alone withstood her spell. The rough Scotch nobles owned that there was in Mary "some enchantment whereby men are bewitched." It was clear indeed from the first that, loyal as Scotland might be, its loyalty would be of little service to the Queen if she attacked the new religion. At her entry into Edinburgh the children of the pageant presented her with a Bible and "made some speech concerning the putting away of the Mass, and thereafter sang a psalm." It was only with difficulty that Murray won for her the right of celebrating Mass at her court. But for the religious difficulty Mary was prepared. While steadily abstaining from any legal confirmation of the new faith, and claiming for her French followers freedom of Catholic worship, she denounced any attempt to meddle with the form of religion

Her
toleration.

CHAP. IV. she found existing in the realm. Such a toleration was little likely to satisfy the more fanatical among the ministers; but even Knox was content with her promise "to hear the preaching," and brought his brethren to a conclusion, as "she might be won," "to suffer her for a time." If the preachers indeed maintained that the Queen's liberty of worship "should be their thralldom," the bulk of the nation was content with Mary's acceptance of the religious state of the realm. Nor was it distasteful to the secular leaders of the reforming party. The Protestant Lords preferred their imperfect work to the more complete reformation which Knox and his fellows called for. They had no mind to adopt the whole Calvinistic system. They had adopted the Genevan Confession of Faith; but they rejected a book of discipline which would have organized the Church on the Huguenot model. All demands for restitution of the church property which they were pillaging they set aside as a "fond imagination." The new ministers remained poor and dependent, while noble after noble was hanging an abbot to seize his estates in forfeiture, or roasting a commendator to wring from him a grant of abbey-lands in fee.

Mary and Elizabeth.

The attitude of the Lords favoured the Queen's designs. She was in effect bartering her toleration of their religion in exchange for her reception in Scotland and for their support of her claim to be named Elizabeth's successor. With Mary's landing at Leith the position of the English Queen had suddenly changed. Her work seemed utterly undone. The national unity for which she was struggling was broken. The presence of Mary woke the party of the old faith to fresh hopes and a fresh activity, while it roused a fresh fear and fanaticism in the party of the new. Scotland, where Elizabeth's influence had seemed supreme, was struck from her hands. Not only was it no longer a support; it was again a danger. Loyalty, national pride, a just and statesmanlike longing for union with England, united her northern subjects round the Scottish Queen in

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her claim to be recognized as Elizabeth's successor. Even CHAP. IV. Murray counted on Elizabeth's consent to this claim to bring Mary into full harmony with his policy, and to preserve the alliance between England and Scotland. But the question of the succession, like the question of her marriage, was with Elizabeth a question of life and death. Her wedding with a Catholic or a Protestant suitor would have been equally the end of her system of balance and national union, a signal for the revolt of the party which she disappointed and for the triumphant dictation of the party which she satisfied. "If a Catholic prince come here," wrote a Spanish ambassador while pressing her marriage with an Austrian archduke, "the first Mass he attends will be the signal for a revolt." It was so with the question of the succession. To name a Protestant successor from the House of Suffolk would have driven every Catholic to insurrection. To name Mary was to stir Protestantism to a rising of despair, and to leave Elizabeth at the mercy of every fanatical assassin who wished to clear the way for a Catholic ruler. Yet to leave both unrecognized was to secure the hostility of both, as well as the discontent of the people at large, who looked on the settlement of the succession as the primary need of their national life. From the moment of Mary's landing therefore Elizabeth found herself thrown again on an attitude of self-defence. Every course of direct action was closed to her. She could satisfy neither Protestant nor Catholic, neither Scotland nor England. Her work could only be a work of patience; the one possible policy was to wait, to meet dangers as they rose, to watch for possible errors in her rival's course, above all by diplomacy, by finesse, by equivocation, by delay, to gain time till the dark sky cleared.

Nothing better proves Elizabeth's political ability than the patience, the tenacity, with which for the six years that followed she played this waiting game. She played it utterly alone. Even Cecil at moments of peril called

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Mary's succession.

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for a policy of action. But his counsels never moved the Queen. Her restless ingenuity vibrated ceaselessly, like the needle of a compass, from one point to another, now stirring hopes in Catholic, now in Protestant, now quivering towards Mary's friendship, then as suddenly trembling off to incur her hate. But tremble and vibrate as it might, Elizabeth's purpose returned ever to the same unchanging point. It was in vain that Mary made a show of friendship, and negotiated for a meeting at York, where the question of the succession might be settled. It was in vain that to prove her lack of Catholic fanaticism she even backed Murray in crushing the Earl of Huntly, the foremost of her Catholic nobles, or that she held out hopes to the English envoy of her conformity to the faith of the Church of England. It was to no purpose that, to meet the Queen's dread of her marriage with a Catholic prince when her succession was once acknowledged, a marriage which would in such a case have shaken Elizabeth on her throne, Mary listened even to a proposal for a match with Lord Leicester, and that Murray supported such a step, if Elizabeth would recognize Mary as her heir. Elizabeth promised that she would do nothing to impair Mary's rights; but she would do nothing to own them. "I am not so foolish," she replied with bitter irony to Mary's entreaties, "I am not so foolish as to hang a winding-sheet before my eyes." That such a refusal was wise time was to show. But even then it is probable that Mary's intrigues were not wholly hidden from the English Queen. Elizabeth's lying paled indeed before the cool duplicity of this girl of nineteen. While she was befriending Protestantism in her realm, and holding out hopes of her mounting the English throne as a Protestant Queen, Mary Stuart was pledging herself to the Pope to restore Catholicism on either side the border, and pressing Philip to aid her in this holy work by giving her the hand of his son Don Carlos. It was with this design that she was fooling the Scotch Lords

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and deceiving Murray: it was with this end that she strove in vain to fool Elizabeth and Knox.

But pierce through the web of lying as she might, the pressure on the English Queen became greater every day. What had given Elizabeth security was the adhesion of the Scotch Protestants and the growing strength of the Huguenots in France. But the firm government of Murray and her own steady abstinence from any meddling with the national religion was giving Mary a hold upon Scotland which drew Protestant after Protestant to her side; while the tide of French Calvinism was suddenly rolled back by the rise of a Catholic party under the leadership of the Guises. Under Catharine of Medicis France had seemed to be slowly drifting to the side of Protestantism. While the Queen-mother strove to preserve a religious truce the attitude of the Huguenots was that of men sure of success. Their head, the King of Navarre, boasted that before the year was out he would have the Gospel preached throughout the realm, and his confidence seemed justified by the rapid advance of the new opinions. They were popular among the merchant class. The *noblesse* was fast becoming Huguenot. At the court itself the nobles feasted ostentatiously on the fast days of the Church and flocked to the Protestant preachings. The clergy themselves seemed shaken. Bishops openly abjured the older faith. Coligni's brother, the Cardinal of Chatillon, celebrated the communion instead of mass in his own episcopal church at Beauvais, and married a wife. So irresistible was the movement that Catharine saw no way of preserving France to Catholicism but by the largest concessions; and in the summer of 1561 she called on the Pope to allow the removal of images, the administration of the sacrament in both kinds, and the abolition of private masses. Her demands were outstripped by those of an assembly of deputies from the states which met at Pontoise. These called for the confiscation of Church property, for freedom of conscience and of worship, and

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above all for a national Council in which every question should be decided by "the Word of God." France seemed on the verge of becoming Protestant; and at a moment when Protestantism had won England and Scotland, and appeared to be fast winning southern as well as northern Germany, the accession of France would have determined the triumph of the Reformation. The importance of its attitude was seen in its effect on the Papacy. It was the call of France for a national Council that drove Rome once more to summon the Council of Trent. It was seen too in the policy of Mary Stuart. With France tending to Calvinism it was no time for meddling with the Calvinism of Scotland; and Mary rivalled Catharine herself in her pledges of toleration. It was seen above all in the anxiety of Philip of Spain. To preserve the Netherlands was still the main aim of Philip's policy, and with France as well as England Protestant, a revolt of the Netherlands against the cruelties of the Inquisition became inevitable. By appeals therefore to religious passion, by direct pledges of aid, the Spanish King strove to rally the party of the Guises against the system of Catharine.

The Civil
War.

But Philip's intrigues were hardly needed to rouse the French Catholics to arms. If the Guises had withdrawn from court it was only to organize resistance to the Huguenots. They were aided by the violence of their opponents. The Huguenot lords believed themselves irresistible; they boasted that the churches numbered more than three hundred thousand men fit to bear arms. But the mass of the nation was hardly touched by the new Gospel; and the Guises stirred busily the fanaticism of the poor. The failure of a conference between the advocates of either faith was the signal for a civil war in the south. Catharine strove in vain to allay the strife at the opening of 1562 by an edict of pacification; Guise struck his counter-blow by massacring a Protestant congregation at Vassy, by entering Paris with two thousand

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men, and by seizing the Regent and the King. Condé and Coligni at once took up arms; and the fanaticism of the Huguenots broke out in a terrible work of destruction which rivalled that of the Scots. All Western France, half Southern France, the provinces along the Loire and the Rhone, rose for the Gospel. Only Paris and the north of France held firmly to Catholicism. But the plans of the Guises had been ably laid. The Huguenots found themselves girt in by a ring of foes. Philip sent a body of Spaniards into Gascony, Italians and Piedmontese in the pay of the Pope and the Duke of Savoy marched upon the Rhone. Seven thousand German mercenaries appeared in the camp of the Guises. Panic ran through the Huguenot forces; they broke up as rapidly as they had gathered; and resistance was soon only to be found in Normandy and in the mountains of the Cevennes.

Condé appealed for aid to the German princes and to Elizabeth and the Huguenots. England: and grudge as she might the danger and cost of such a struggle, Elizabeth saw that her aid must be given. She knew that the battle with her opponent had to be fought abroad rather than at home. The Guises were Mary's uncles; and their triumph meant trouble in Scotland and worse trouble in England. In September therefore she concluded a treaty with the Huguenots at Hampton Court, and promised to supply them with six thousand men and a hundred thousand crowns. The bargain she drove was a hard one. She knew that the French had no purpose of fulfilling their pledge to restore Calais, and she exacted the surrender of Havre into her hands as a security for its restoration. Her aid came almost too late. The Guises saw the need of securing Normandy if English intervention was to be hindered, and a vigorous attack brought about the submission of the province. But the Huguenots were now reinforced by troops from the German princes; and at the close of 1562 the two armies met on the field of Dreux. The strife had already widened into a general war of religion. It was the fight, not of French

CHAP. IV. factions, but of Protestantism and Catholicism, that was to be fought out on the fields of France. The two warring elements of Protestantism were represented in the Huguenot camp where German Lutherans stood side by side with the French Calvinists. On the other hand the French Catholics were backed by soldiers from the Catholic cantons of Switzerland, from the Catholic states of Germany, from Catholic Italy, and from Catholic Spain. The encounter was a desperate one, but it ended in a virtual triumph for the Guises. While the German troops of Coligni clung to the Norman coast in the hope of subsidies from Elizabeth, the Duke of Guise was able to march at the opening of 1563 on the Loire, and form the siege of Orleans.

Mary and Protestantism. In Scotland Mary Stuart was watching her uncle's progress with ever-growing hope. The policy of Murray had failed in the end to which she mainly looked. Her acceptance of the new religion, her submission to the Lords of the Congregation, had secured her a welcome in Scotland and gathered the Scotch people round her standard. But it had done nothing for her on the other side of the border. Two years had gone by, and any recognition of her right of succession to the English crown seemed as far off as ever. But Murray's policy was far from being Mary's only resource. She had never surrendered herself in more than outer show to her brother's schemes. In heart she had never ceased to be a bigoted Catholic, resolute for the suppression of Protestantism as soon as her toleration of it had given her strength enough for the work. It was this that made the strife between the two Queens of such terrible moment for English freedom. Elizabeth was fighting for more than personal ends. She was fighting for more than her own occupation of the English throne. Consciously or unconsciously she was struggling to avert from England the rule of a Queen who would have undone the whole religious work of the past half-century, who would have swept England back into the tide of Catholicism, and who in doing this would

have blighted and crippled its national energies at the very moment of their mightiest development. It was the presence of such a danger that sharpened the eyes of Protestants on both sides the border. However she might tolerate the reformed religion or hold out hopes of her compliance with a reformed worship, no earnest Protestant either in England or in Scotland could bring himself to see other than an enemy in the Scottish Queen. Within a few months of her arrival the cool eye of Knox had pierced through the veil of Mary's dissimulation. "The Queen," he wrote to Cecil, "neither is nor shall be of our opinion." Her steady refusal to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh or to confirm the statutes on which the Protestantism of Scotland rested was of far greater significance than her support of Murray or her honeyed messages to Elizabeth. While the young Queen looked coolly on at the ruin of the Catholic house of Huntly, at the persecution of Catholic recusants, at so strict an enforcement of the new worship that "none within the realm durst more avow the hearing or saying of Mass than the thieves of Liddesdale durst avow their stealth in presence of an upright judge," she was in secret correspondence with the Guises and the Pope. Her eye was fixed upon France. While Catharine of Medicis was all powerful, while her edict secured toleration for the Huguenots on one side of the sea, Mary knew that it was impossible to refuse toleration on the other. But with the first movement of the Duke of Guise fiercer hopes revived. Knox was "assured that the Queen danced till after midnight because that she had received letters that persecution was begun in France, and that her uncles were beginning to stir their tail, and to trouble the whole realm of France." Whether she gave such open proof of her joy or no, Mary woke to a new energy at the news of Guise's success. She wrote to Pope Pius to express her regret that the heresy of her realm prevented her sending envoys to the Council of Trent. She assured the Cardinal of Lorraine

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CHAP. IV. that she would restore Catholicism in her dominions, even at the peril of her life. She pressed on Philip of Spain a proposal for her marriage with his son, Don Carlos, as a match which would make her strong enough to restore Scotland to the Church.

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The
Papal
Brief.

The echo of the French conflict was felt in England as in the north. The English Protestants saw in it the approach of a struggle for life and death at home. The English Queen saw in it a danger to her throne. So great was Elizabeth's terror at the victory of Dreux that she resolved to open her purse-strings and to hire fresh troops for the Huguenots in Germany. But her dangers grew at home as abroad. The victory of Guise dealt the first heavy blow at her system of religious conformity. Rome had abandoned its dreams of conciliation on her refusal to own the Council of Trent, and though Philip's entreaties brought Pius to suspend the issue of a Bull of Deposition, the Papacy opened the struggle by issuing in August 1562 a brief which pronounced joining in the Common Prayer schismatic and forbade the attendance of Catholics at church. On no point was Elizabeth so sensitive, for on no point had her policy seemed so successful. Till now, whatever might be their fidelity to the older faith, few Englishmen had carried their opposition to the Queen's changes so far as to withdraw from religious communion with those who submitted to them. But with the issue of the brief this unbroken conformity came to an end. A few of the hotter Catholics withdrew from church. Heavy fines were laid on them as recusants; fines which, as their numbers increased, became a valuable source of supply for the royal exchequer. But no fines could compensate for the moral blow which their withdrawal dealt. It was the beginning of a struggle which Elizabeth had averted through three memorable years. Protestant fanaticism met Catholic fanaticism, and as news of the massacre at Vassy spread through England the Protestant preachers called for the death of

"Papists." The tidings of Dreux spread panic through the realm. The Parliament which met again in January 1563 showed its terror by measures of a new severity. There had been enough of words, cried one of the Queen's ministers, Sir Francis Knollys, "it was time to draw the sword."

The sword was drawn in the first of a series of penal statutes which weighed upon English Catholics for two hundred years. By this statute an oath of allegiance to the Queen and of abjuration of the temporal authority of the Pope was exacted from all holders of office, lay or spiritual, within the realm, with the exception of peers. Its effect was to place the whole power of the realm in the hands either of Protestants or of Catholics who accepted Elizabeth's legitimacy and her ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the teeth of the Papacy. The oath of supremacy was already exacted from every clergyman and every member of the universities. But the obligation of taking it was now widely extended. Every member of the House of Commons, every officer in the army or the fleet, every schoolmaster and private tutor, every justice of the peace, every municipal magistrate, to whom the oath was tendered, was pledged from this moment to resist the blows which Rome was threatening to deal. Extreme caution indeed was used in applying this test to the laity, but pressure was more roughly put on the clergy. A great part of the parish priests, though they had submitted to the use of the Prayer-book, had absented themselves when called on to take the oath prescribed by the Act of Uniformity, and were known to be Catholics in heart. As yet Elizabeth had cautiously refused to allow any strict enquiry into their opinions. But a commission was now opened by her order at Lambeth, to enforce the Act of Uniformity in public worship; while thirty-nine of the Articles of Faith drawn up under Edward the Sixth, which had till now been left in suspense by her Government, were adopted in Convocation as a standard of faith, and acceptance of them demanded from all the clergy.

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With the Test Act and the establishment of the High Commission the system which the Queen had till now pursued in great measure ceased. Elizabeth had "drawn the sword." It is possible she might still have clung to her older policy had she foreseen how suddenly the danger which appalled her was to pass away. At this crisis, as ever, she was able to "count on Fortune." The Test Act was hardly passed when in February 1563 the Duke of Guise was assassinated by a Protestant zealot, and with his murder the whole face of affairs was changed. The Catholic army was paralyzed by its leader's loss, while Coligni, who was now strengthened with money and forces from England, became master of Normandy. The war however came quietly to an end; for Catharine of Medicis regained her power on the Duke's death, and her aim was still an aim of peace. A treaty with the Huguenots was concluded in March, and a new edict of Amboise restored the truce of religion. Elizabeth's luck indeed was chequered by a merited humiliation. Now that peace was restored Huguenot and Catholic united to demand the surrender of Havre; and an outbreak of plague among its garrison compelled the town to capitulate. The new strife in which England thus found itself involved with the whole realm of France moved fresh hopes in Mary Stuart. Mary had anxiously watched her uncle's progress, for his success would have given her the aid of a Catholic France in her projects on either side of the border. But even his defeat failed utterly to dishearten her. The war between the two Queens which followed it might well force Catharine of Medicis to seek Scottish aid against England, and the Scottish Queen would thus have secured that alliance with a great power which the English Catholics demanded before they would rise at her call. At home troubles were gathering fast around her. Veil her hopes as she might, the anxiety with which she had followed the struggle of her kindred had not been lost on the Protestant leaders, and it is probable that

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Knox at any rate had learned something of her secret correspondence with the Pope and the Guises. The Scotch Calvinists were stirred by the peril of their brethren in France, and the zeal of the preachers was roused by a revival of the old worship in Clydesdale and by the neglect of the Government to suppress it. In the opening of 1563 they resolved "to put to their own hands," and without further plaint to Queen or Council to carry out "the punishment that God had appointed to idolaters in his law." In Mary's eyes such a resolve was rebellion. But her remonstrances only drew a more formal doctrine of resistance from Knox. "The sword of justice, madam, is God's," said the stern preacher, "and is given to princes and rulers for an end; which, if they transgress, they that in the fear of God execute judgements when God has commanded offend not God. Neither yet sin they that bridle kings who strike innocent men in their rage." The Queen was forced to look on while nearly fifty Catholics, some of them high ecclesiastics, were indicted and sent to prison for celebrating mass in Paisley and Ayrshire.

The zeal of the preachers was only heightened by the coolness of the Lords. A Scotch Parliament which assembled in the summer of 1563 contented itself with securing the spoilers in their possession of the Church lands, but left the Acts passed in 1560 for the establishment of Protestantism unconfirmed as before. Such a silence Knox regarded as treason to the faith. He ceased to have any further intercourse with Murray, and addressed a burning appeal to the Lords, "Will ye betray God's cause when ye have it in your hands to establish it as ye please? The Queen, ye say, will not agree with you. Ask ye of her that which by God's word ye may justly require, and if she will not agree with ye in God, ye are not bound to agree with her in the devil!" The inaction of the nobles proved the strength which Mary drew from the attitude of France. So long as France and England were at war, so long as a French force might at

Peace
with
France.

CHAP. IV. any moment be despatched to Mary's aid, it was impossible for them to put pressure on the Queen; and bold as was the action of the preachers the Queen only waited her opportunity for dealing them a fatal blow. But whatever hopes Mary may have founded on the strife, they were soon brought to an end. Catharine used her triumph only to carry out her system of balance, and to resist the joint remonstrance of the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of Spain against her edict of toleration. The policy of Elizabeth, on the other hand, was too much identified with Catharine's success to leave room for further hostilities; and a treaty of peace between the two countries was concluded in the spring of 1564.

Darnley. The peace with France marked a crisis in the struggle between the rival Queens. It left Elizabeth secure against a Catholic rising and free to meet the pressure from the north. But it dashed the last hopes of Mary Stuart to the ground. The policy which she had pursued from her landing in Scotland had proved a failure in the end at which it aimed. Her religious toleration, her patience, her fair speeches, had failed to win from Elizabeth a promise of the succession. And meanwhile the Calvinism she hated was growing bolder and bolder about her. The strife of religion in France had woke a fiercer bigotry in the Scotch preachers. Knox had discovered her plans of reaction, had publicly denounced her designs of a Catholic marriage, and had met her angry tears, her threats of vengeance, with a cool defiance. All that Murray's policy seemed to have really done was to estrange from her the English Catholics. Already alienated from Mary by her connexion with France, which they still regarded as a half-heretic power, and by the hostility of Philip, in whom they trusted as a pure Catholic, the adherents of the older faith could hardly believe in the Queen's fidelity to their religion when they saw her abandoning Scotland to heresy and holding out hopes of her acceptance of the Anglican creed. Her presence had roused them to a new energy,

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and they were drifting more and more as the strife waxed warmer abroad to dreams of forcing on Elizabeth a Catholic successor. But as yet their hopes turned not so much to Mary Stuart as to the youth who stood next to the Scottish Queen in the line of blood. Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, was a son of the Countess of Lennox, Margaret Douglas, a daughter of Margaret Tudor by her second marriage with the Earl of Angus. Lady Lennox was the successor whom Mary Tudor would willingly have chosen in her sister's stead, had Philip and the Parliament suffered her; and from the moment of Elizabeth's accession the Countess had schemed to drive her from the throne. She offered Philip to fly with her boy to the Low Countries and to serve as a pretender in his hands. She intrigued with the partizans of the old religion. Though the house of Lennox conformed to the new system of English worship, its sympathies were known to be Catholic, and the hopes of the Catholics wrapped themselves round its heir. "Should any disaster befall the Queen," wrote a Spanish ambassador in 1560, "the Catholics would choose Lord Darnley for King." "Not only," he adds in a later letter, "would all sides agree to choose him were the Queen to die, but the Catholic Lords, if opportunity offer, may declare for him at once."

His strongest rival was Mary Stuart, and before Mary landed in Scotland Lady Lennox planned the union of both their claims by the marriage of her son with the Scottish Queen. A few days after her landing Mary received a formal offer of his hand. Hopes of yet greater matches, of a marriage with Philip's son, Don Carlos, or with the young French King, Charles the Ninth, had long held the scheme at bay; but as these and her policy of conciliation proved alike fruitless Mary turned to the Lennoxes. The marriage was probably planned by David Rizzio, a young Piedmontese who had won the Scotch Queen's favour, and through whom she conducted the intrigues, both in England and abroad, by which she purposed to

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free herself from Murray's power and to threaten Elizabeth. Her diplomacy was winning Philip to her cause. The Spanish King had as yet looked upon Mary's system of toleration and on her hopes from France with equal suspicion. But he now drew slowly to her side. Pressed hard in the Mediterranean by the Turks, he was harassed more than ever by the growing discontent of the Netherlands, where the triumph of Protestantism in England and Scotland and the power of the Huguenots in France gave fresh vigour to the growth of Calvinism, and where the nobles were stirred to new outbreaks against the foreign rule of Spain by the success of the Scottish Lords in their rising and by the terms of semi-independence which the French nobles wrested from the Queen. It was to hold the Netherlands in check that Philip longed for Mary's success. Her triumph over Murray and his confederates would vindicate the cause of monarchy; her triumph over Calvinism would vindicate that of Catholicism both in her own realm and in the realm which she hoped to win. He sent her therefore assurances of his support, and assurances as strong reached her from the Vatican. The dispensation which was secretly obtained for her marriage with Darnley was granted on the pledge of both to do their utmost for the restoration of the old religion.

*The
Darnley
Marriage.*

Secret as was the pledge, the mere whisper of the match revealed their danger to the Scotch Protestants. The Lords of the Congregation woke with a start from their confidence in the Queen. Murray saw that the policy to which he had held his sister since her arrival in the realm was now to be abandoned. Mary was no longer to be the Catholic ruler of a Protestant country, seeking peaceful acknowledgement of her right of succession to Elizabeth's throne; she had placed herself at the head of the English Catholics, and such a position at once threatened the safety of Protestantism in Scotland itself. If once Elizabeth were overthrown by a Catholic rising, and a Catholic policy established in England, Scotch Protest-

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antism was at an end. At the first rumour of the match therefore Murray drew Argyle and the Hamiltons round him in a band of self-defence, and refused his signature to a paper recommending Darnley as husband to the Queen. But Mary's diplomacy detached from him lord after lord, till his only hope lay in the opposition of Elizabeth. The marriage with Darnley was undoubtedly a danger even more formidable to England than to Scotland. It put an end to the dissensions which had till now broken the strength of the English Catholics. It rallied them round Mary and Darnley as successors to the throne. It gathered to their cause the far greater mass of cautious conservatives who had been detached from Mary by her foreign blood and by dread of her kinship with the Guises. Darnley was reckoned an Englishman, and with an English husband to sway her policy Mary herself seemed to become an Englishwoman. But it was in vain that the Council pronounced the marriage a danger to the realm, that Elizabeth threatened Mary with war, or that she plotted with Murray for the seizure of Mary and the driving Darnley back over the border. Threat and plot were too late to avert the union, and at the close of July, 1565, Darnley was married to Mary Stuart and proclaimed King of Scotland. Murray at once called the Lords of the Congregation to arms. But the most powerful and active stood aloof. As heir of the line of Angus, Darnley was by blood the head of the house of Douglas, and Protestants as they were, the Douglasses rallied to their kinsman. Their actual chieftain, the Earl of Morton, stood next to Murray himself in his power over the Congregation; he was chancellor of the realm; and his strength as a great noble was backed by a dark and unscrupulous ability. By waiving their claim to the earldom of Angus and the lands which he held, the Lennoxes won Morton to his kinsman's cause, and the Earl was followed in his course by two of the sternest and most active among the Protestant Lords, Darnley's uncle,

CHAP. IV. Lord Ruthven, and Lord Lindesay, who had married a
 England Douglas. Their desertion broke Murray's strength; and
 and Mary his rising was hardly declared when Mary marched on
 Stuart. his little force with pistols in her belt, and drove its
 1561- leaders over the border.
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Mary and
 Catholi-
 cism.

The work which Elizabeth had done in Scotland had been undone in an hour. Murray was a fugitive. The Lords of the Congregation were broken or dispersed. The English party was ruined. And while Scotland was lost it seemed as if the triumph of Mary was a signal for the general revival of Catholicism. The influence of the Guises had again become strong in France, and though Catharine of Medicis held firmly to her policy of toleration, an interview which she held with Alva at Bayonne led every Protestant to believe in the conclusion of a league between France and Spain for a common war on Protestantism. To this league the English statesmen held that Mary Stuart had become a party, and her pressure upon Elizabeth was backed by the suspicion that the two great monarchies had pledged her their support. No such league existed, nor had such a pledge been given, but the dread served Mary's purpose as well as the reality could have done. Girt in, as she believed, with foes, Elizabeth took refuge in the meanest dissimulation, while Mary Stuart imperiously demanded a recognition of her succession as the price of peace. But her aims went far beyond this demand. She found herself greeted at Rome as the champion of the Faith. Pius the Fifth, who mounted the Papal throne at the moment of her success, seized on the young Queen to strike the first blow in the crusade against Protestantism on which he was set. He promised her troops and money. He would support her, he said, so long as he had a single chalice to sell. "With the help of God and your Holiness," Mary wrote back, "I will leap over the wall." In England itself the marriage and her new attitude rallied every Catholic to Mary's standard; and the announcement of her pregnancy which followed

gave her a strength that swept aside Philip's counsels of caution and delay. The daring advice of Rizzio fell in with her natural temper. She resolved to restore Catholicism in Scotland. Yield as she might to Murray's pressure, she had dexterously refrained from giving legal confirmation to the resolutions of the Parliament by which Calvinism had been set up in Scotland; and in the Parliament which she summoned for the coming spring she trusted to do "some good anent restoring the old religion." The appearance of the Catholic lords, the Earls of Huntly, Athol, and Bothwell, at Mary's court showed her purpose to attempt this religious revolution. Nor were her political schemes less resolute. She was determined to wring from the coming Parliament a confirmation of the banishment of the lords who had fled with Murray which would free her for ever from the pressure of the Protestant nobles. Mistress of her kingdom, politically as well as religiously, Mary could put a pressure on Elizabeth which might win for her more than an acknowledgement of her right to the succession. She still clung to her hopes of the crown; and she knew that the Catholics of Northumberland and Yorkshire were ready to revolt as soon as she was ready to aid them.

No such danger had ever threatened Elizabeth as this. But again she could "trust to fortune." Mary had staked all on her union with Darnley, and yet only a few months had passed since her wedding-day when men saw that she "hated the King." The boy turned out a dissolute, insolent husband; and Mary's scornful refusal of his claim of the "crown matrimonial," which would have given him an equal share of the royal power with herself, widened the breach between them. Darnley attributed this refusal to Rizzio's counsels; and his father, Lord Lennox, joined with him in plotting vengeance against the secretary. They sought aid from the very party whom Darnley's marriage had been planned to crush. Though the strength of the Protestant nobles had been broken by the

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flight of Murray, the Douglasses remained at the court. Morton had no purpose of lending himself to the ruin of the religion he professed, and Ruthven and Lindesay were roused to action when they saw themselves threatened with a restoration of Catholicism, and with a legal banishment of Murray and his companions in the coming Parliament, which could only serve as a prelude to their own ruin. Rizzio was the author of this policy; and when Darnley called on his kinsmen to aid him in attacking Rizzio, the Douglasses grasped at his proposal. Their aid and their promise of the crown matrimonial was bought by Darnley's consent to the recall of the fugitive lords and of Murray. The plot of the Douglasses was so jealously hidden that no whisper of it reached the Queen. Her plans were on the brink of success. The Catholic nobles were ready for action at her court. Huntly and Bothwell were called into the Privy Council. At the opening of March 1566 the Parliament which was to carry out her projects was to assemble; and the Queen prepared for her decisive stroke by naming men whom she could trust as Lords of the Articles—a body with whom lay the proposal of measures to the Houses—and by restoring the bishops to their old places among the peers. But at the moment when Mary revealed the extent of her schemes by her dismissal of the English ambassador, the young King, followed by Lord Ruthven, burst into her chamber, dragged Rizzio from her presence, and stabbed him in an outer chamber, while Morton and Lord Lindsay with their followers seized the palace gate. Mary found herself a prisoner in the hands of her husband and his confederates. Her plans were wrecked in an hour. A proclamation of the King dissolved the Parliament which she had called for the ruin of her foes; and Murray, who was on his way back from England when the deed was done, was received at Court and restored to his old post at the Council-board.

Mary's
revenge.

Terrible as the blow had been, it roused the more terrible energies which lay hid beneath the graceful

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bearing of the Queen. The darker features of her character were now to develop themselves. With an inflexible will she turned to build up again the policy which seemed shattered in Rizzio's murder. Her passionate resentment bent to the demands of her ambition. "No more tears," she said when they brought her news of Rizzio's murder; "I will think upon revenge." But even revenge was not suffered to interfere with her political schemes. Keen as was Mary's thirst for vengeance on him, Darnley was needful to the triumph of her aims, and her first effort was to win him back. He was already grudging at the supremacy of the nobles and his virtual exclusion from power, when Mary masking her hatred beneath a show of affection succeeded in severing the wretched boy from his fellow-conspirators, and in gaining his help in an escape to Dunbar. Once free, a force of eight thousand men under the Earl of Bothwell quickly gathered round her, and with these troops she marched in triumph on Edinburgh. An offer of pardon to all save those concerned in Rizzio's murder broke up the force of the Lords; Glencairn and Argyle joined the Queen, while Morton, Ruthven, and Lindesay fled in terror over the border. But Mary had learned by a terrible lesson the need of dissimulation. She made no show of renewing her Catholic policy. On the contrary, she affected to resume the system which she had pursued from the opening of her reign, and suffered Murray to remain at the court. Rizzio's death had in fact strengthened her position. With him passed away the dread of a Catholic reaction. Mary's toleration, her pledges of extending an equal indulgence to Protestantism in England, should she mount its throne, her marriage to one who was looked upon as an English noble, above all the hope of realizing through her succession the dream of a union of the realms, again told on the wavering body of more Conservative statesmen, like Norfolk, and even drew to her side some of the steadier Protestants who despaired of a Protestant

CHAP. IV. succession. Even Elizabeth at last seemed wavering towards a recognition of her as her successor. But Mary aimed at more than the succession. Her intrigues with the English Catholics were never interrupted. Her seeming reconciliation with the young King preserved that union of the whole Catholic body which her marriage had brought about and which the strife over Rizzio threatened with ruin. Her court was full of refugees from the northern counties. "Your actions," Elizabeth wrote in a sudden break of fierce candour, "are as full of venom as your words are of honey." Fierce words however did nothing to break the clouds that gathered thicker and thicker round England: and in June the birth of a boy, the future James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, doubled Mary's strength. Elizabeth felt bitterly the blow. "The Queen of Scots," she cried, "has a fair son, and I am but a barren stock." The birth of James in fact seemed to settle the long struggle in Mary's favour. The moderate Conservatives joined the ranks of her adherents. The Catholics were wild with hope. "Your friends are so increased," her ambassador, Melville, wrote to her from England, "that many whole shires are ready to rebel, and their captains named by election of the nobility." On the other hand, the Protestants were filled with despair. It seemed as if no effort could avert the rule of England by a Catholic Queen.

*The
develop-
ment of
England.*

It was at this moment of peril that the English Parliament was again called together. Its action showed more than the natural anxiety of the time; it showed the growth of those national forces which far more than the schemes of Mary or the counter-schemes of Elizabeth were to determine the future of England. While the two queens were heaping intrigue on intrigue, while abroad and at home every statesman held firmly that national welfare or national misery hung on the fortune of the one or the success of the other, the English people itself was steadily moving forward to a new spiritual

enlightenment and a new political liberty. The intellectual and religious impulses of the age were already combining with the influence of its growing wealth to revive a spirit of independence in the nation at large. It was impossible for Elizabeth to understand this spirit, but her wonderful tact enabled her from the first to feel the strength of it. Long before any open conflict arose between the people and the Crown we see her instinctive perception of the changes which were going on around her in the modifications, conscious or unconscious, which she introduced into the system of the monarchy. Of its usurpations upon English liberty she abandoned none. But she curtailed and softened down almost all. She tampered, as her predecessors had tampered, with personal freedom; there was the same straining of statutes and coercion of juries in political trials as before, and an arbitrary power of imprisonment was still exercised by the Council. The duties she imposed on cloth and sweet wines were an assertion of her right of arbitrary taxation. Proclamations in Council constantly assumed the force of law. But, boldly as it was asserted, the royal power was practically wielded with a caution and moderation that showed the sense of a growing difficulty in the full exercise of it. The ordinary course of justice was left undisturbed. The jurisdiction of the Council was asserted almost exclusively over the Catholics; and defended in their case as a precaution against pressing dangers. The proclamations issued were temporary in character and of small importance. The two duties imposed were so slight as to pass almost unnoticed in the general satisfaction at Elizabeth's abstinence from internal taxation. She abandoned the benevolences and forced loans which had brought home the sense of tyranny to the subjects of her predecessors. She treated the Privy Seals, which on emergencies she issued for advances to her Exchequer, simply as anticipations of her revenue (like our own Exchequer Bills), and punctually repaid them.

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CHAP. IV. The monopolies with which she fettered trade proved a more serious grievance; but during her earlier reign they were looked on as a part of the system of Merchant Associations, which were at that time regarded as necessary for the regulation and protection of the growing commerce.

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The
advance
of the
Parlia-
ment.

The political developement of the nation is seen still more in the advance of the Parliament during Elizabeth's reign. The Queen's thrift enabled her in ordinary times of peace to defray the current expenses of the Crown from its ordinary revenues. But her thrift was dictated not so much by economy as by a desire to avoid summoning fresh Parliaments. We have seen how boldly the genius of Thomas Cromwell set aside on this point the tradition of the New Monarchy. His confidence in the power of the Crown revived the Parliament as an easy and manageable instrument of tyranny. The old forms of constitutional freedom were turned to the profit of the royal despotism, and a revolution which for the moment left England absolutely at Henry's feet was wrought out by a series of parliamentary statutes. Throughout Henry's reign Cromwell's confidence was justified by the spirit of slavish submission which pervaded the Houses. But the effect of the religious change for which his measures made room began to be felt during the minority of Edward the Sixth; and the debates and divisions on the religious reaction which Mary pressed on the Parliament were many and violent. A great step forward was marked by the effort of the Crown to neutralize by "management" an opposition which it could no longer overawe. Not only was the Parliament packed with nominees of the Crown but new constituencies were created whose members would follow implicitly its will. For this purpose twenty-two new boroughs were created under Edward, fourteen under Mary; some, indeed, places entitled to representation by their wealth and population, but the bulk of them small towns or hamlets which lay wholly at the disposal of the Royal Council.

Elizabeth adopted the system of her two predecessors both in the creation of boroughs and the recommendation of candidates; but her keen political instinct soon perceived the inutility of both expedients. She saw that the "management" of the Houses, so easy under Cromwell, was becoming harder every day. The very number of the members she called up into the Commons from nomination boroughs, sixty-two in all, showed the increasing difficulty which the government found in securing a working majority. The rise of a new nobility enriched by the spoils of the Church and trained to political life by the stress of events around them was giving fresh vigour to the House of Lords. The increased wealth of the country gentry as well as the growing desire to obtain a seat among the Commons brought about the cessation at this time of the old payment of members by their constituencies. A change too in the borough representation, which had long been in progress but was now for the first time legally recognized, tended greatly to increase the vigour and independence of the Lower House. By the terms of the older writs borough members were required to be chosen from the body of the burgesses; and an act of Henry the Fifth gave this custom the force of law. But the passing of such an act shows that the custom was already widely infringed, and by Elizabeth's day act and custom alike had ceased to have force. Most seats were now filled by representatives who were strange to the borough itself, and who were often nominees of the great landowners round. But they were commonly men of wealth and blood whose aim in entering parliament was a purely political one, and whose attitude towards the Crown was far bolder and more independent than that of the quiet tradesmen who preceded them. Elizabeth saw that "management" was of little avail with a house of members such as these; and she fell back as far as she could on Wolsey's policy of practical abolition. She summoned Parliaments at longer and longer intervals. By

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Elizabeth
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Houses.

CHAP. IV. rigid economy, by a policy of balance and peace, she strove, and for a long time successfully strove, to avoid the necessity of assembling them at all. But Mary of Scotland and Philip of Spain proved friends to English liberty in its sorest need. The struggle with Catholicism forced Elizabeth to have more frequent recourse to her Parliaments, and as she was driven to appeal for increasing supplies the tone of the Houses rose higher and higher.

*The
struggle
with the
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What made this revival of Parliamentary independence more important was the range which Cromwell's policy had given to Parliamentary action. In theory the Tudor statesman regarded three cardinal subjects, matters of trade, matters of religion, and matters of State, as lying exclusively within the competence of the Crown. But in actual fact such subjects had been treated by Parliament after Parliament. The whole religious fabric of the realm rested on Parliamentary enactments. The very title of Elizabeth rested in a Parliamentary statute. When the Houses petitioned at the outset of her reign for the declaration of a successor and for the Queen's marriage it was impossible for her to deny their right to intermeddle with these "matters of State," though she rebuked the demand and evaded an answer. But the question of the succession was a question too vital for English freedom and English religion to remain prisoned within Elizabeth's council-chamber. It came again to the front in the Parliament which the pressure from Mary Stuart forced Elizabeth to assemble after six prorogations and an interval of four years in September, 1566. The Lower House at once resolved that the business of supply should go hand in hand with that of the succession. Such a step put a stress on the monarchy which it had never known since the War of the Roses. The Commons no longer confined themselves to limiting or resisting the policy of the Crown; they dared to dictate it. Elizabeth's wrath showed her sense of the importance of their action.

CHAP. IV. "They had acted like rebels!" she said, "they had dealt with her as they dared not have dealt with her father." "I cannot tell," she broke out angrily to the Spanish ambassador, "what these devils want!" "They want liberty, madam," replied the Spaniard, "and if princes do not look to themselves and work together to put such people down they will find before long what all this is coming to!" But Elizabeth had to front more than her Puritan Commons. The Lords joined with the Lower House in demanding the Queen's marriage and a settlement of the succession, and after a furious burst of anger Elizabeth gave a promise of marriage, which she was no doubt resolved to evade as she had evaded it before. But the subject of the succession was one which could not be evaded. Yet any decision on it meant civil war. It was notorious that if the Commons were resolute to name the Lady Catharine Grey, the heiress of the House of Suffolk, successor to the throne, the Lords were as resolute to assert the right of Mary Stuart. To settle such a matter was at once to draw the sword. The Queen therefore peremptorily forbade the subject to be approached. But the royal message was no sooner delivered than Wentworth, a member of the House of Commons, rose to ask whether such a prohibition was not "against the liberties of Parliament." The question was followed by a hot debate, and a fresh message from the Queen commanding "that there should be no further argument" was met by a request for freedom of deliberation while the subsidy bill lay significantly unnoticed on the table. A new strife broke out when another member of the Commons, Mr. Dalton, denounced the claims put forward by the Scottish Queen. Elizabeth at once ordered him into arrest. But the Commons prayed for leave "to confer upon their liberties," and the Queen's prudence taught her that it was necessary to give way. She released Dalton; she protested to the Commons that "she did not mean to prejudice any part of the liberties heretofore granted

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CHAP. IV. them;" she softened the order of silence into a request.
 England and Mary Stuart. Won by the graceful concession, the Lower House granted the subsidy and assented loyally to her wish. But the victory was none the less a real one. No such struggle had taken place between the Crown and the Commons since the beginning of the New Monarchy; and the struggle had ended in the virtual defeat of the Crown.

Shane O'Neill. The strife with the Parliament hit Elizabeth hard. It was "secret foes at home," she told the House as the quarrel passed away in a warm reconciliation, "who thought to work me that mischief which never foreign enemies could bring to pass, which is the hatred of my Commons. Do you think that either I am so unmindful of your surety by succession, wherein is all my care, or that I went about to break your liberties? No! it never was my meaning; but to stay you before you fell into the ditch." But it was impossible for her to explain the real reasons for her course, and the dissolution of the Parliament in January, 1567, left her face to face with a national discontent added to the ever-deepening peril from without. To the danger from the north and from the east was added a danger from the west. The north of Ireland was in full revolt. From the moment of her accession Elizabeth had realized the risks of the policy of confiscation and colonization which had been pursued in the island by her predecessor: and the prudence of Cecil fell back on the safer though more tedious policy of Henry the Eighth. But the alarm at English aggression had already spread among the natives; and its result was seen in a revolt of the north, and in the rise of a leader more vigorous and able than any with whom the Government had had as yet to contend. An acceptance of the Earldom of Tyrone by the chief of the O'Neills brought about the inevitable conflict between the system of succession recognized by English and that recognized by Irish law. On the death of the Earl of Tyrone England acknowledged his eldest son as the heir of his Earldom; while the

sept of which he was the head maintained their older right of choosing a chief from among the members of the family, and preferred Shane O'Neill, a younger son of less doubtful legitimacy. The Lord Deputy, the Earl of Sussex, marched northward to settle the question by force of arms; but ere he could reach Ulster the activity of Shane had quelled the disaffection of his rivals, the O'Donnells of Donegal, and won over the Scots of Antrim. "Never before," wrote Sussex, "durst Scot or Irishman look Englishman in the face in plain or wood since I came here;" but Shane fired his men with a new courage, and charging the Deputy's army with a force hardly half its number drove it back in rout on Armagh. A promise of pardon induced the Irish chieftain to visit London, and make an illusory submission, but he was no sooner safe home again than its terms were set aside; and after a wearisome struggle, in which Shane foiled the efforts of the Lord Deputy to entrap or to poison him, he remained virtually master of the north. His success stirred larger dreams of ambition. He invaded Connaught, and pressed Clanrickard hard; while he replied to the remonstrances of the Council at Dublin with a bold defiance. "By the sword I have won these lands," he answered, "and by the sword will I keep them." But defiance broke idly against the skill and vigour of Sir Henry Sidney, who succeeded Sussex as Lord Deputy. The rival septs of the north were drawn into a rising against O'Neill, while the English army advanced from the Pale; and in 1567 Shane, defeated by the O'Donnells, took refuge in Antrim, and was hewn to pieces in a drunken squabble by his Scottish entertainers.

The victory of Sidney marked the turn of the tide which had run so long against Elizabeth. The danger which England dreaded from Mary Stuart, the terror of a Catholic sovereign and a Catholic re-action, reached its height only to pass irretrievably away. At the moment when the Irish revolt was being trampled under foot a terrible event suddenly struck light through the

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Bothwell.

CHAP. IV. gathering clouds in the north. Mary had used Darnley as a tool to bring about the ruin of his confederates and to further her policy; but from the moment that she discovered his actual complicity in the plot for Rizzio's murder she had loathed and avoided him. Ominous words dropped from her lips. "Unless she were free of him some way," Mary was heard to mutter, "she had no pleasure to live." The lords whom he had drawn into his plot only to desert and betray them hated him with as terrible a hatred, and in their longing for vengeance a new adventurer saw the road to power. Of all the border nobles James Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell, was the boldest and the most unscrupulous. But, Protestant as he was, he had never swerved from the side of the Crown; he had supported the Regent, and crossed the seas to pledge as firm a support to Mary; and his loyalty and daring alike appealed to the young Queen's heart. Little as he was touched by Mary's passion, it stirred in the Earl dreams of a union with the Queen; and great as were the obstacles to such a union which presented themselves in Mary's marriage and his own, Bothwell was of too desperate a temper to recoil before obstacles such as these. Divorce would free him from his own wife. To free himself from Darnley he seized on the hatred which the lords whom Darnley had deserted and betrayed bore to the King. Bothwell joined Murray and the English ambassador in praying for the recall of Morton and the exiles. The pardon was granted; the nobles returned to court, and the bulk of them joined readily in a conspiracy to strike down one whom they still looked on as their bitterest foe.

Darnley's murder.

Morton alone stood aloof. He demanded an assurance of the Queen's sanction to the deed; and no such assurance was given him. On the contrary Mary's mood seemed suddenly to change. Her hatred to Darnley passed all at once into demonstration of the old affection. He had fallen sick with vice and misery, and

she visited him on his sick-bed, and persuaded him to follow her to Edinburgh. She visited him again in a ruinous and lonely house near the palace in which he was lodged by her order, on the ground that its purer air would further his recovery, kissed him as she bade him farewell, and rode gaily back to a wedding-dance at Holyrood. If Mary's passion had drawn her to share Bothwell's guilt, these acts were but awful preludes to her husband's doom. If on the other hand her reconciliation was a real one, it only drove Bothwell to hurry on his deed of blood without waiting for the aid of the nobles who had sworn the King's death. The terrible secret is still hid in a cloud of doubt and mystery which will probably never be wholly dispelled. But Mary had hardly returned to her palace when, two hours after midnight on the ninth of February, 1567, an awful explosion shook the city. The burghers rushed out from the gates to find the house of Kirk o' Field destroyed and Darnley's body dead beside the ruins.

The murder was undoubtedly the deed of Bothwell. It was soon known that his servant had stored the powder beneath the King's bed-chamber and that the Earl had watched without the walls till the deed was done. But, in spite of gathering suspicion and of a charge of murder made formally against Bothwell by Lord Lennox, no serious steps were taken to investigate the crime; and a rumour that Mary purposed to marry the murderer drove her friends to despair. Her agent in England wrote to her that "if she married that man she would lose the favour of God, her own reputation, and the hearts of all England, Ireland, and Scotland." But whatever may have been the ties of passion or guilt which united them, Mary was now powerless in Bothwell's hands. While Murray withdrew to France on pretext of travel, the young Earl used the plot against Darnley into which he had drawn the lords to force from them a declaration that he was guiltless of the murder and their consent to his marriage with the Queen. He boasted that he would marry Mary, whether she would

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Mary's fall.

CHAP. IV. or no. Every stronghold in the kingdom was placed in his hands, and this step was the prelude to a trial and acquittal which the overwhelming force of his followers in Edinburgh turned into a bitter mockery. The Protestants were bribed by the assembling of a Parliament in which Mary for the first time gave her sanction to the laws which established the reformation in Scotland. A shameless suit for his divorce removed the last obstacle to Bothwell's ambition; and a seizure of the Queen as she rode to Linlithgow, whether real or fictitious, was followed three weeks later by their union on the fifteenth of May. Mary may have yielded to force; she may have yielded to passion; it is possible that in Bothwell's vigour she saw the means of at last mastering the kingdom and wreaking her vengeance on the lords. But whatever were her hopes or fears, in a month more all was over. The horror at the Queen's marriage with a man fresh from her husband's blood drove the whole nation to revolt. The Catholic party held aloof from a Queen who seemed to have forsaken them by a Protestant marriage and by her acknowledgment of the Protestant Church. The Protestant lords seized on the general horror to free themselves from a master whose subtlety and bloodshed had placed them at his feet. Morton and Argyle rallied the forces of the Congregation at Stirling, and were soon joined by the bulk of the Scottish nobles of either religion. Their entrance into Edinburgh roused the capital into insurrection. On the fifteenth of June Mary and her husband advanced with a fair force to Seton to encounter the Lords; but their men refused to fight, and Bothwell galloped off into lifelong exile, while the Queen was brought back to Edinburgh in a frenzy of despair, tossing back wild words of defiance to the curses of the crowd.

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CHAPTER V.

ENGLAND AND THE PAPACY.

1567—1576.

THE fall of Mary freed Elizabeth from the most terrible of her outer dangers. But it left her still struggling with ever-growing dangers at home. The religious peace for which she had fought so hard was drawing to an end. Sturdily as she might aver to her subjects that no change had really been made in English religion, that the old faith had only been purified, that the realm had only been freed from Papal usurpation, jealously as she might preserve the old episcopate, the old service, the old vestments and usages of public worship, her action abroad told too plainly its tale. The world was slowly drifting to a gigantic conflict between the tradition of the past and a faith that rejected the tradition of the past; and in this conflict men saw that England was ranging itself not on the side of the old belief but of the new. The real meaning of Elizabeth's attitude was revealed in her refusal to own the Council of Trent. From that moment the hold which she had retained on all who still clung strongly to Catholic doctrine was roughly shaken. Her system of conformity received a heavy blow from the decision of the Papacy that attendance at the common prayer was unlawful. Her religious compromise was almost destroyed by the victory of the Guises. In the moment of peril she was driven on Protestant support, and Protestant support had to be bought by a Test Act which excluded every

England
and
religious
change.

CHAP. V. zealous Catholic from all share in the government or administration of the realm, while the re-enactment of Edward's Articles by the Convocation of the clergy was an avowal of Protestantism which none could mistake. **England and the Papacy. 1567-1576.** Whatever in fact might be Elizabeth's own predilections, even the most cautious of Englishmen could hardly doubt of the drift of her policy. The hopes which the party of moderation had founded on a marriage with Philip, or a marriage with the Austrian Archduke, or a marriage with Dudley, had all passed away. The conciliatory efforts of Pope Pius had been equally fruitless. The last hope of a quiet undoing of the religious changes lay in the succession of Mary Stuart. But with the fall of Mary a peaceful return to the older faith became impossible; and the consciousness of this could hardly fail to wake new dangers for Elizabeth, whether at home or abroad.

Progress of the Reformation.

It was in fact at this moment of seeming triumph that the great struggle of her reign began. In 1565 a pontiff was chosen to fill the Papal chair whose policy was that of open war between England and Rome. At no moment in its history had the fortunes of the Roman See sunk so low as at the accession of Pius the Fifth. The Catholic revival had as yet done nothing to arrest the march of the Reformation. In less than half a century the new doctrines had spread from Iceland to the Pyrenees and from Finland to the Alps. When Pius mounted the throne Lutheranism was firmly established in Scandinavia and in Northern Germany. Along the eastern border of the Empire it had conquered Livonia and Old Prussia; its adherents formed a majority of the nobles of Poland; Hungary seemed drifting towards heresy; and in Transylvania the Diet had already confiscated all Church lands. In Central Germany the great prelates whose prince-doms covered so large a part of Franconia opposed in vain the spread of Lutheran doctrine. It seemed as triumphant in Southern Germany, for the Duchy of Austria was for the most part Lutheran, and many of the Bavarian towns

with a large part of the Bavarian nobles had espoused the cause of the Reformation. In Western Europe the fiercer doctrines of Calvinism took the place of the faith of Luther. At the death of Henry the Second Calvin's missionaries poured from Geneva over France, and in a few years every province of the realm was dotted with Calvinistic churches. The Huguenots rose into a great political and religious party which struggled openly for the mastery of the realm and wrested from the Crown a legal recognition of its existence and of freedom of worship. The influence of France told quickly on the regions about it. The Rhine-land was fast losing its hold on Catholicism. In the Netherlands, where the persecutions of Charles the Fifth had failed to check the upgrowth of heresy, his successor saw Calvinism win state after state, and gird itself to a desperate struggle at once for religious and for civil independence. Still further west a sudden revolution had won Scotland for the faith of Geneva; and a revolution hardly less sudden, though marked with consummate subtlety, had in effect added England to the Churches of the Reformation. Christendom in fact was almost lost to the Papacy; for only two European countries owned its sway without dispute. "There remain firm to the Pope," wrote a Venetian ambassador to his State, "only Spain and Italy with some few islands, and those countries possessed by your Serenity in Dalmatia and Greece."

It was at this moment of defeat that Pius the Fifth mounted the Papal throne. His earlier life had been that of an Inquisitor; and he combined the ruthlessness of a persecutor with the ascetic devotion of a saint. Pius had but one end, that of re-conquering Christendom, of restoring the rebel nations to the fold of the Church, and of stamping out heresy by fire and sword. To his fiery faith every means of warfare seemed hallowed by the sanctity of his cause. The despotism of the prince, the passion of the populace, the sword of the mercenary, the very dagger of the assassin, were all seized without scruple as

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weapons in the warfare of God. The ruthlessness of the Inquisitor was turned into the world-wide policy of the Papacy. When Philip doubted how to deal with the troubles in the Netherlands, Pius bade him deal with them by force of arms. When the Pope sent soldiers of his own to join the Catholics in France he bade their leader "slay instantly whatever heretic fell into his hands." The massacres of Alva were rewarded by a gift of the consecrated hat and sword, as the massacre of St. Bartholomew was hailed by the successor of Pius with a solemn thanksgiving. The force of the Pope's effort lay in its concentration of every energy on a single aim. Rome drew in fact a new power from the ruin of her schemes of secular aggrandizement. The narrower hopes and dreads which had sprung from their position as Italian princes told no longer on the Popes. All hope of the building up of a wider principedom passed away. The hope of driving the stranger from Italy came equally to an end. But on the other hand Rome was screened from the general conflicts of the secular powers. It was enabled to be the friend of every Catholic State, and that at a moment when every Catholic State saw in the rise of Calvinism a new cause for seeking its friendship. Calvinism drew with it a thirst for political liberty, and religious revolution became the prelude to political revolution. From this moment therefore the cause of the Papacy became the cause of kings, and a craving for self-preservation rallied the Catholic princes round the Papal throne. The same dread of utter ruin rallied round it the Catholic Church. All strife, all controversy was hushed in the presence of the foe. With the close of the Council of Trent came a unity of feeling and of action such as had never been seen before. Faith was defined. The Papal authority stood higher than ever. The bishops owned themselves to be delegates of the Roman See. The clergy were drawn together into a disciplined body by the institution of seminaries. The new religious orders carried everywhere the watchword of

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implicit obedience. As the heresy of Calvin pressed on to one victory after another, the Catholic world drew closer and closer round the standard of Rome.

What raised the warfare of Pius into grandeur was the scale upon which he warred. His hand was everywhere throughout Christendom. Under him Rome became the political as well as the religious centre of Western Europe. The history of the Papacy widened again, as in the Middle Ages, into the history of the world. Every scheme of the Catholic resistance was devised or emboldened at Rome. While her Jesuit emissaries won a new hold in Bavaria and Southern Germany, rolled back the tide of Protestantism in the Rhine-land, and by school and pulpit laboured to re-Catholicize the Empire, Rome spurred Mary Stuart to the Darnley marriage, urged Philip to march Alva on the Netherlands, broke up the religious truce which Catharine had won for France, and celebrated with solemn pomp the massacre of the Huguenots. England above all was the object of Papal attack. The realm of Elizabeth was too important for the general Papal scheme of reconquering Christendom to be lightly let go. England alone could furnish a centre to the reformed communions of Western Europe. The Lutheran states of North Germany were too small. The Scandinavian kingdoms were too remote. Scotland hardly ranked as yet as a European power. Even if France joined the new movement her influence would long be neutralized by the strife of the religious parties within her pale. But England was to outlast seeming a united realm. Her government held the country firmly in hand. Whether as an island or from her neighbourhood to the chief centres of the religious strife, she was so placed as to give an effective support to the new opinions. Protestant refugees found a safe shelter within her bounds. Her trading ships diffused heresy in every port they touched at. She could at little risk feed the Calvinistic revolution in France or the Netherlands. In the great battle of the old faith and the new England

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was thus the key of the reformed position. With England Protestant the fight against Protestantism could only be a slow and doubtful one. On the other hand a Catholic England would render religious revolution in the west all but hopeless. Hand in hand with Philip religiously, as she already was politically, the great island might turn the tide of the mighty conflict which had so long gone against the Papacy.

It was from this sense of the importance of England in the world-wide struggle which it was preparing that Rome had watched with such a feverish interest the effort of Mary Stuart. Her victory would have given to Catholicism the two westernmost realms of the Reformation, England and Scotland; it would have aided it in the re-conquest of the Netherlands and of France. No formal bond indeed, such as the Calvinists believed to exist, bound Mary and Pius and Philip and Catharine of Medicis together in a vast league for the restoration of the Faith; their difference of political aim held France and Spain obstinately apart both from each other and from Mary Stuart, and it was only at the Vatican that the great movement was conceived as a whole. But practically the policy of Mary and Philip worked forward to the same end. While the Scottish Queen prepared her counter-reformation in England and Scotland, Philip was gathering a formidable host which was to suppress Calvinism as well as liberty in the Netherlands. Of the seventeen provinces which Philip had inherited from his father, Charles, in this part of his dominions, each had its own constitution, its own charter and privileges, its own right of taxation. All clung to their local independence; and resistance to any projects of centralization was common to the great nobles and the burghers of the towns. Philip on the other hand was resolute to bring them by gradual steps to the same level of absolute subjection and incorporation in the body of the monarchy as the provinces of Castille. The Netherlands were the wealthiest part of his dominions. Flanders

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Alva.

alone contributed more to his exchequer than all his kingdoms in Spain. With a treasury drained by a thousand schemes Philip longed to have this wealth at his unfettered disposal, while his absolutism recoiled from the independence of the States, and his bigotry drove him to tread their heresy under foot. Policy backed the impulses of greed and fanaticism. In the strangely mingled mass of the Spanish monarchy, the one bond which held together its various parts, divided as they were by blood, by tradition, by tongue, was their common faith. Philip was in more than name the "Catholic King." Catholicism alone united the burgher of the Netherlands to the nobles of Castille, or Milanese and Neapolitan to the Aztec of Mexico and Peru. With such an empire heresy meant to Philip political chaos, and the heresy of Calvin, with its ready organization and its doctrine of resistance, promised not only chaos but active revolt. In spite therefore of the growing discontent in the Netherlands, in spite of the alienation of the nobles and the resistance of the Estates, he clung to a system of government which ignored the liberties of every province, and to a persecution which drove thousands of skilled workmen to the shores of England.

At last the general discontent took shape in open resistance. The success of the French Huguenots in wresting the free exercise of their faith from the monarchy told on the Calvinists of the Low Countries. The nobles gathered in leagues. Riots broke out in the towns. The churches were sacked, and heretic preachers preached in the open fields to multitudes who carried weapons to protect them. If Philip's system was to continue it must be by force of arms, and the King seized the disturbances as a pretext for dealing a blow he had long meditated at the growing heresy of this portion of his dominions. Pius the Fifth pressed him to deal with heresy by the sword, and in 1567 an army of ten thousand men gathered in Italy under the Duke of Alva for a march on the Low Countries.

CHAP. V. Had Alva reached the Netherlands while Mary was still in the flush of her success, it is hard to see how England could have been saved. But again Fortune proved Elizabeth's friend. The passion of Mary shattered the hopes of Catholicism, and at the moment when Alva led his troops over the Alps Mary passed a prisoner within the walls of Lochleven. Alone however the Duke was a mighty danger: nor could any event have been more embarrassing to Elizabeth than his arrival in the Netherlands in the autumn of 1567. The terror he inspired hushed all thought of resistance. The towns were occupied. The heretics were burned. The greatest nobles were sent to the block or driven, like William of Orange, from the country. The Netherlands lay at Philip's feet; and Alva's army lowered like a thundercloud over the Protestant West.

*Mary's
abdication.*

The triumph of Catholicism and the presence of a Catholic army in a country so closely connected with England at once revived the dreams of a Catholic rising against Elizabeth's throne, while the news of Alva's massacres stirred in every one of her Protestant subjects a thirst for revenge which it was hard to hold in check. Yet to strike a blow at Alva was impossible. Antwerp was the great mart of English trade, and a stoppage of the trade with Flanders, such as war must bring about, would have broken half the merchants in London. Elizabeth could only look on while the Duke trod resistance and heresy under foot, and prepared in the Low Countries a securer starting-point for his attack on Protestantism in the West. With Elizabeth, indeed, or her cautious and moderate Lutheranism Philip had as yet little will to meddle, however hotly Rome might urge him to attack her. He knew that the Calvinism of the Netherlands looked for support to the Calvinism of France; and as soon as Alva's work was done in the Low Countries the Duke had orders to aid the Guises in assailing the Huguenots. But the terror of the Huguenots precipitated the strife, and while Alva was still busy with attacks from

the patriots under the princes of the house of Orange a fresh rising in France woke the civil war at the close of 1567. Catharine lulled this strife for the moment by a new edict of toleration; but the presence of Alva was stirring hopes and fears in other lands than France. Between Mary Stuart and the lords who had imprisoned her in Lochleven reconciliation was impossible. Elizabeth, once lightened of her dread from Mary, would have been content with a restoration of Murray's actual supremacy. Already alarmed by Calvinistic revolt against monarchy in France, she was still more alarmed by the success of Calvinistic revolt against monarchy in Scotland; and the presence of Alva in the Netherlands made her anxious above all to settle the troubles in the north and to devise some terms of reconciliation between Mary and her subjects. But it was in vain that she demanded the release of the Queen. The Scotch Protestants, with Knox at their head, called loudly for Mary's death as a murderess. If the lords shrank from such extremities, they had no mind to set her free and to risk their heads for Elizabeth's pleasure. As the price of her life they forced Mary to resign her crown in favour of her child, and to name Murray, who was now returning from France, as regent during his minority. In July, 1567, the babe was solemnly crowned as James the Sixth.

But Mary had only consented to abdicate because she felt sure of escape. With an infant king the regency of Murray promised to be a virtual sovereignty; and the old factions of Scotland woke again into life. The house of Hamilton, which stood next in succession to the throne, became the centre of a secret league which gathered to it the nobles and prelates who longed for the re-establishment of Catholicism, and who saw in Alva's triumph a pledge of their own. The regent's difficulties were doubled by the policy of Elizabeth. Her wrath at the revolt of subjects against their Queen, her anxiety that "by this example none of her own be encouraged," only grew with the

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disregard of her protests and threats. In spite of Cecil she refused to recognize Murray's government, renewed her demands for the Queen's release, and encouraged the Hamiltons in their designs of freeing her. She was in fact stirred by more fears than her dread of Calvinism and of Calvinistic liberty. Philip's triumph in the Netherlands and the presence of his army across the sea was filling the Catholics of the northern counties with new hopes, and scaring Elizabeth from any joint action with the Scotch Calvinists which might call the Spanish forces over sea. She even stooped to guard against any possible projects of Philip by fresh negotiations for a marriage with one of the Austrian archdukes. But the negotiations proved as fruitless as before, while Scotland moved boldly forward in its new career. A Parliament which assembled at the opening of 1568 confirmed the deposition of the Queen, and made Catholic worship punishable with the pain of death. The triumph of Calvinistic bigotry only hastened the outbreak which had long been preparing, and at the beginning of May an escape of Mary from her prison was a signal for civil war. Five days later six thousand men gathered round her at Hamilton, and Argyle joined the Catholic lords who rallied to her banner. The news found different welcomes at the English court. Elizabeth at once offered to arbitrate between Mary and her subjects. Cecil, on the other hand, pressed Murray to strike quick and hard. But the regent needed little pressing. Surprized as he was, Murray was quickly in arms; and cutting off Mary's force as it moved on Dumbarton, he brought it to battle at Langside on the Clyde on the thirteenth of May, and broke it in a panic-stricken rout. Mary herself, after a fruitless effort to reach Dumbarton, fled southwards to find a refuge in Galloway. A ride of ninety miles brought her to the Solway, but she found her friends wavering in her support and ready to purchase pardon from Murray by surrendering her into the regent's hands. From that moment she aban-

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doned all hope from Scotland. She believed that Elizabeth would in the interests of monarchy restore her to the throne; and changing her designs with the rapidity of genius, she pushed in a light boat across the Solway, and was safe before the evening fell in the castle of Carlisle.

The presence of Alva in Flanders was a far less peril than the presence of Mary in Carlisle. To restore her, as she demanded, by force of arms was impossible. If Elizabeth was zealous for the cause of monarchy, she had no mind to crush the nobles who had given her security against her rival simply to seat that rival triumphantly on the throne. On the other hand to retain her in England was to furnish a centre for revolt. Mary herself indeed threatened that "if they kept her prisoner they should have enough to do with her." If the Queen would not aid in her restoration to the throne, she demanded a free passage to France. But compliance with such a request would have given the Guises a terrible weapon against Elizabeth and have ensured French intervention in Scotland. For a while Elizabeth hoped to bring Murray to receive Mary back peaceably as Queen. But the regent refused to sacrifice himself and the realm to Elizabeth's policy. When the Duke of Norfolk with other commissioners appeared at York to hold a formal enquiry into Mary's conduct with a view to her restoration, Murray openly charged the Queen with a share in the murder of her husband, and he produced letters from her to Bothwell, which if genuine substantiated the charge. Till Mary was cleared of guilt, Murray would hear nothing of her return, and Mary refused to submit to such a trial as would clear her. So eager however was Elizabeth to get rid of the pressing peril of her presence in England that Mary's refusal to submit to any trial only drove her to fresh devices for her restoration. She urged upon Murray the suppression of the graver charges, and upon Mary the leaving Murray in actual possession of the royal power as the price of her return. Neither however would listen to terms which

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sacrificed both to Elizabeth's self-interest. The Regent persisted in charging the Queen with murder and adultery. Mary refused either to answer or to abdicate in favour of her infant son.

The triumph indeed of her bold policy was best advanced, as the Queen of Scots had no doubt foreseen, by simple inaction. Her misfortunes, her resolute denials, were gradually wiping away the stain of her guilt and winning back the Catholics of England to her cause. Already there were plans for her marriage with Norfolk, the head of the English nobles, as for her marriage with the heir of the Hamiltons. The first match might give her the English crown, the second could hardly fail to restore her to the crown of Scotland. In any case her presence, rousing as it did fresh hopes of a Catholic reaction, put pressure on her sister Queen. Elizabeth "had the wolf by the ears," while the fierce contest which Alva's presence roused in France and in the Netherlands was firing the temper of the two great parties in England. In the Court, as in the country, the forces of progress and of resistance stood at last in sharp and declared opposition to each other. Cecil at the head of the Protestants demanded a general alliance with the Protestant churches throughout Europe, a war in the Low Countries against Alva, and the unconditional surrender of Mary to her Scotch subjects for the punishment she deserved. The Catholics on the other hand, backed by the mass of the Conservative party with the Duke of Norfolk at its head, and supported by the wealthier merchants who dreaded the ruin of the Flemish trade, were as earnest in demanding the dismissal of Cecil and the Protestants from the council-board, a steady peace with Spain, and, though less openly, a recognition of Mary's succession. Elizabeth was driven to temporize as before. She refused Cecil's counsels; but she sent money and arms to Condé, and hampered Alva by seizing treasure on its way to him, and by pushing the quarrel even to a temporary embargo on shipping either side the sea.

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She refused the counsels of Norfolk; but she would hear nothing of a declaration of war, or give any judgement on the charges against the Scottish Queen, or recognize the accession of James in her stead.

But to the pressure of Alva and Mary was now added the pressure of Rome. With the triumph of Philip in the Netherlands and of the Guises in France Pius the Fifth held that the time had come for a decisive attack on Elizabeth. If Philip held back from playing the champion of Catholicism, if even the insults to Alva failed to stir him to active hostility, Rome could still turn to its adherents within the realm. Pius had already sent two envoys in 1567 with powers to absolve the English Catholics who had attended church from their schism, but to withdraw all hope of future absolution for those who continued to conform. The result of their mission however had been so small that it was necessary to go further. The triumph of Alva in the Netherlands, the failure of the Prince of Orange in an attempt to rescue them from the Spanish army, the terror-struck rising of the French Huguenots, the growing embarrassments of Elizabeth both at home and abroad, seemed to offer Rome its opportunity of delivering a final blow. In February, 1569, the Queen was declared a heretic by a Bull which asserted in their strongest form the Papal claims to a temporal supremacy over princes. As a heretic and excommunicate, she was "deprived of her pretended right to the said kingdom," her subjects were absolved from allegiance to her, commanded "not to dare to obey her," and anathematized if they did obey. The Bull was not as yet promulgated, but Dr. Morton was sent into England to denounce the Queen as fallen from her usurped authority, and to promise the speedy issue of the sentence of deposition. The religious pressure was backed by political intrigue. Ridolfi, an Italian merchant settled in London, who had received full powers and money from Rome, knit the threads of a Catholic revolt in the north, and drew the Duke of Norfolk into

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correspondence with Mary Stuart. The Duke was the son of Lord Surrey and grandson of the Norfolk who had headed the Conservative party through the reign of Henry the Eighth. Like the rest of the English peers, he had acquiesced in the religious compromise of the Queen. It was as a Protestant that the more Conservative among his fellow nobles now supported a project for his union with the Scottish Queen. With an English and Protestant husband it was thought that Murray and the lords might safely take back Mary to the Scottish throne, and England again accept her as the successor to her crown. But Norfolk was not contented with a single game. From the Pope and Philip he sought aid in his marriage-plot as a Catholic at heart, whose success would bring about a restoration of Catholicism throughout the realm. With the Catholic lords he plotted the overthrow of Cecil and the renewal of friendship with Spain. To carry out schemes such as these however required a temper of subtler and bolder stamp than the Duke's: Cecil found it easy by playing on his greed to part him from his fellow nobles; his marriage with Mary as a Protestant was set aside by Murray's refusal to accept her as Queen; and Norfolk promised to enter into no correspondence with Mary Stuart but with Elizabeth's sanction.

*The
Catholic
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The hope of a crown, whether in Scotland or at home, proved too great however for his good faith, and Norfolk was soon wrapped anew in the net of papal intrigue. But it was not so much on Norfolk that Rome counted as on the nobles of the North. The three great houses of the northern border—the Cliffords of Cumberland, the Nevilles of Westmoreland, the Percies of Northumberland—had remained Catholics at heart; and from the moment of Mary's entrance into England they had been only waiting for a signal of revolt. They looked for foreign aid, and foreign aid now seemed assured. In spite of Elizabeth's help the civil war in France went steadily against the Huguenots. In March 1569 their army was routed at Jarnac,

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and their leader, Condé, left dead on the field. The joy with which the victory was greeted by the English Catholics sprang from a consciousness that the victors looked on it as a prelude to their attack on Protestantism across the sea. No sooner indeed was this triumph won than Mary's uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, as the head of the house of Guise, proposed to Philip to complete the victory of Catholicism by uniting the forces of France and Spain against Elizabeth. The moment was one of peril such as England had never known. Norfolk was still pressing forward to a marriage with Mary; he was backed by the second great Conservative peer, Lord Arundel, and supported by a large part of the nobles. The Northern Earls with Lords Montague and Lumley and the head of the great house of Dacres were ready to take up arms, and sure—as they believed—of the aid of the Earls of Derby and Shrewsbury. Both parties of plotters sought Philip's sanction and placed themselves at his disposal. A descent of French and Spanish troops would have called both to the field. But much as Philip longed for a triumph of religion he had no mind for a triumph of France. France now meant the Guises, and to set their niece Mary Stuart on the English throne was to ensure the close union of England and the France they ruled. Though he suffered Alva therefore to plan the despatch of a force from the Netherlands should a Catholic revolt prove successful, he refused to join in a French attack.

But the Papal exhortations and the victories of the Guises did their work without Philip's aid. The conspirators of the north only waited for Norfolk's word to rise in arms. But the Duke dissembled and delayed, while Elizabeth, roused at last to her danger, struck quick and hard. Mary Stuart was given in charge to the Puritan Lord Huntingdon. The Earls of Arundel and Pembroke, with Lord Lumley, were secured. Norfolk himself, summoned peremptorily to court, dared not disobey; and found himself at the opening of October a prisoner in the Tower.

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CHAP. V. The more dangerous plot was foiled, for whatever
 England and the Papacy. 1567-1576. were Norfolk's own designs, most of his Conservative partizans were good Protestants, and their aim of securing the succession by a Protestant marriage for Mary was one with which the bulk of the nation would have sympathized. But the Catholic plot remained; and in October the hopes of its leaders were stirred afresh by a new defeat of the Huguenots at Montcontour; while a Papal envoy, Dr. Morton, goaded them to action by news that a Bull of Deposition was ready at Rome. At last a summons to court tested the loyalty of the Earls, and on the tenth of November, 1569, Northumberland gave the signal for a rising. He was at once joined by the Earl of Westmoreland, and in a few days the Earls entered Durham and called the North to arms. They shrank from an open revolt against the Queen, and demanded only the dismissal of her ministers and the recognition of Mary's right of succession. But with these demands went a pledge to re-establish the Catholic religion. The Bible and Prayer-book were torn to pieces, and Mass said once more at the altar of Durham Cathedral, before the Earls pushed on to Doncaster with an army which soon swelled to thousands of men. Their cry was "to reduce all causes of religion to the old custom and usage;" and the Earl of Sussex, her general in the North, wrote frankly to Elizabeth that "there were not ten gentlemen in Yorkshire that did allow [approve] her proceedings in the cause of religion." But he was as loyal as he was frank, and held York stoutly while the Queen ordered Mary's hasty removal to a new prison at Coventry. The storm however broke as rapidly as it had gathered. Leonard Dacres held aloof. Lord Derby proved loyal. The Catholic lords of the south refused to stir without help from Spain. The mass of the Catholics throughout the country made no sign; and the Earls no sooner halted irresolute in presence of this unexpected inaction than their army caught the panic and dispersed. Northumberland and Westmoreland fled in the middle of December,

and were followed in their flight by Leonard Dacres of Naworth, while their miserable adherents paid for their disloyalty in bloodshed and ruin.

The ruthless measures of repression which followed this revolt were the first breach in the clemency of Elizabeth's rule. But they were signs of terror which were not lost on her opponents. It was the general inaction of the Catholics which had foiled the hopes of the northern Earls; and Pope Pius resolved to stir them to activity by publishing in March, 1570, the Bull of Excommunication and Deposition which had been secretly issued in the preceding year. In his Bull Pius declared that Elizabeth had forfeited all right to the throne, released her subjects from their oath of allegiance to her, and forbade her nobles and people to obey her on pain of excommunication. In spite of the efforts of the Government to prevent the entry of any copies of this sentence into the realm the Bull was found nailed in a spirit of ironical defiance on the Bishop of London's door. Its effect was far from being what Rome desired. With the exception of one or two zealots the English Catholics treated the Bull as a dead letter. The duty of obeying the Queen seemed a certain thing to them, while that of obeying the Pope in temporal matters was denied by most and doubted by all. Its spiritual effect indeed was greater. The Bull dealt a severe blow to the religious truce which Elizabeth had secured. In the North the Catholics withdrew stubbornly from the national worship, and everywhere throughout the realm an increase in the number of recusants showed the obedience of a large body of Englishmen to the Papal command. To the minds of English statesmen such an obedience to the Papal bidding in matters of religion only heralded an obedience to the Papal bidding in matters of state. In issuing the Bull of Deposition Pius had declared war upon the Queen. He had threatened her throne. He had called on her subjects to revolt. If his secret pressure had stirred the rising of the Northern Earls, his open

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declaration of war might well rouse a general insurrection of Catholics throughout the realm, while the plots of his agents threatened the Queen's life.

How real was the last danger was shown at this moment by the murder of Murray. In January 1570 a Catholic partizan, James Hamilton, shot the Regent in the streets of Linlithgow; and Scotland plunged at once into war between the adherents of Mary and those of her son. The blow broke Elizabeth's hold on Scotland at a moment when conspiracy threatened her hold on England itself. The defeat of the Earls had done little to check the hopes of the Roman court. Its intrigues were busier than ever. At the close of the rising Norfolk was released from the Tower, but he was no sooner free than he renewed his correspondence with the Scottish Queen. Mary consented to wed him, and the Duke, who still professed himself a Protestant, trusted to carry the bulk of the English nobles with him in pressing a marriage which seemed to take Mary out of the hands of French and Catholic intriguers, to make her an Englishwoman, and to settle the vexed question of the succession to the throne. But it was only to secure this general adhesion that Norfolk delayed to declare himself a Catholic. He sought the Pope's approval of his plans, and appealed to Philip for the intervention of a Spanish army. At the head of this appeal stood the name of Mary; while Norfolk's name was followed by those of many lords of "the old blood," as the prouder peers styled themselves. The significance of the request was heightened by gatherings of Catholic refugees at Antwerp in the heart of Philip's dominions in the Low Countries round the fugitive leaders of the Northern Revolt. The intervention of the Pope was brought to quicken Philip's slow designs. Ridolfi, as the agent of the conspirators, appeared at Rome and laid before Pius their plans for the marriage of Norfolk and Mary, the union of both realms under the Duke and the Scottish Queen, and the seizure of Elizabeth and her

counsellors at one of the royal country houses. Pius backed the project with his warm approval, and Ridolfi hurried to secure the needful aid from Philip of Spain.

Enough of these conspiracies was discovered to rouse a fresh ardour in the menaced Protestants. While Ridolfi was negotiating at Rome and Madrid, the Parliament met to pass an act of attainder against the Northern Earls, and to declare the introduction of Papal Bulls into the country an act of high treason. It was made treason to call the Queen heretic or schismatic, or to deny her right to the throne. The rising indignation against Mary, as "the daughter of Debate, who discord fell doth sow," was shown in a statute, which declared any person who laid claim to the Crown during the Queen's lifetime incapable of ever succeeding to it. The disaffection of the Catholics was met by imposing on all magistrates and public officers the obligation of subscribing to the Articles of Faith, a measure which in fact transferred the administration of justice and public order to their Protestant opponents, by forbidding conversions to Catholicism or the bringing into England of Papal absolutions or objects consecrated by the Pope. Meanwhile Ridolfi was struggling in vain against Philip's caution. The King made no objection to the seizure or assassination of Elizabeth. The scheme secured his fullest sympathy; no such opportunity, he held, would ever offer again; and he longed to finish the affair quickly before France should take part in it. But he could not be brought to send troops to England before Elizabeth was secured. If troops were once sent, the failure of the plot would mean war with England; and with fresh troubles threatening Alva's hold on the Netherlands Philip had no mind to risk an English war. Norfolk on the other hand had no mind to risk a rising before Spanish troops were landed, and Ridolfi's efforts failed to bring either Duke or King to action. But the clue to these negotiations had long been in Cecil's hands; and at the opening of 1571 Norfolk's

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schemes of ambition were foiled by his arrest. He was convicted of treason, and after a few months' delay executed at the Tower.

With the death of Norfolk and that of Northumberland, who followed him to the scaffold, the dread of revolt within the realm which had so long hung over England passed quietly away. The failure of the two attempts not only showed the weakness and disunion of the party of discontent and reaction, but it revealed the weakness of all party feeling before the rise of a national temper which was springing naturally out of the peace of Elizabeth's reign, and which a growing sense of danger to the order and prosperity around it was fast turning into a passionate loyalty to the Queen. It was not merely against Cecil's watchfulness or Elizabeth's cunning that Mary and Philip and the Percies dashed themselves in vain; it was against a new England. And this England owed its existence to the Queen. "I have desired," Elizabeth said proudly to her Parliament, "to have the obedience of my subjects by love, and not by compulsion." Through the fourteen years which had passed since she mounted the throne, her subjects' love had been fairly won by justice and good government. The current of political events had drawn men's eyes chiefly to the outer dangers of the country, to the policy of Philip and of Rome, to the revolutions of France, to the pressure from Mary Stuart. No one had watched these outer dangers so closely as the Queen. But buried as she seemed in foreign negotiations and intrigues, Elizabeth was above all an English sovereign. She devoted herself ably and energetically to the task of civil administration. At the first moment of relief from the pressure of outer troubles, after the treaty of Edinburgh, she faced the two main causes of internal disorder. The debasement of the coinage was brought to an end in 1560. In 1561 a commission was issued to enquire into the best means of facing the problem of social pauperism.

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Time, and the natural developement of new branches of

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industry, were working quietly for the relief of the glutted labour market; but a vast mass of disorder still existed in England, which found a constant ground of resentment in the enclosures and evictions which accompanied the progress of agricultural change. It was on this host of "broken men" that every rebellion could count for support; their mere existence was an encouragement to civil war; while in peace their presence was felt in the insecurity of life and property, in bands of marauders which held whole counties in terror, and in "sturdy beggars" who stripped travellers on the road. Under Elizabeth as under her predecessors the terrible measures of repression, whose uselessness More had in vain pointed out, went pitilessly on. We find the magistrates of Somersetshire capturing a gang of a hundred at a stroke, hanging fifty at once on the gallows, and complaining bitterly to the Council of the necessity for waiting till the Assizes before they could enjoy the spectacle of the fifty others hanging beside them. But the Government were dealing with the difficulty in a wiser and more effectual way. The old powers to enforce labour on the idle and settlement on the vagrant class which had been given by statutes of Henry the Eighth were continued; and each town and parish was held responsible for the relief of its indigent and disabled poor, as well as for the employment of able-bodied mendicants. But a more efficient machinery was gradually devised for carrying out the relief and employment of the poor. Funds for this purpose had been provided by the collection of alms in church; but by an Act of 1562 the mayor of each town and the churchwardens of each country parish were directed to draw up lists of all inhabitants able to contribute to such a fund, and on a persistent refusal the justices in sessions were empowered to assess the offender at a fitting sum and to enforce its payment by imprisonment.

The principles embodied in these measures, that of

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local responsibility for local distress, and that of a distinction between the pauper and the vagabond, were more clearly defined in a statute of 1572. By this Act the justices in the country districts and mayors and other officers in towns were directed to register the impotent poor, to settle them in fitting habitations and to assess all inhabitants for their support. Overseers were appointed to enforce and superintend their labour, for which wool, hemp, flax, or other stuff was to be provided at the expense of the inhabitants; and houses of correction were established in every county for obstinate vagabonds or for paupers refusing to work at the overseer's bidding. A subsequent Act transferred to these overseers the collection of the poor rate, and powers were given to bind poor children as apprentices, to erect buildings for the improvident poor, and to force the parents and children of such paupers to maintain them. The well-known Act which matured and finally established this system, the 43rd of Elizabeth, remained the base of our system of pauper-administration until a time within the recollection of living men. Whatever flaws a later experience has found in these measures, their wise and humane character formed a striking contrast to the legislation which had degraded our statute-book from the date of the Statute of Labourers; and their efficacy at the time was proved by the cessation of the social danger against which they were intended to provide.

*Growth of
wealth.*

Its cessation however was owing, not merely to law, but to the natural growth of wealth and industry throughout the country. A middle class of wealthier landowners and merchants was fast rising into importance. "The wealth of the meaner sort," wrote one to Cecil, "is the very fount of rebellion, the occasion of their indolence, of the contempt of the nobility, and of the hatred they have conceived against them." But Cecil and his mistress could watch the upgrowth of national wealth with cooler eyes. In the country its effect was to undo much of the evil

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which the diminution of small holdings had done. Whatever social embarrassment it might bring about, the revolution in agriculture which Latimer deplored undoubtedly favoured production. Not only was a larger capital brought to bear upon the land, but the mere change in the system of cultivation introduced a taste for new and better modes of farming; the breed of horses and of cattle was improved, and a far greater use made of manure and dressings. One acre under the new system produced, it was said, as much as two under the old. As a more careful and constant cultivation was introduced, a greater number of hands came to be required on every farm; and much of the surplus labour which had been flung off the land in the commencement of the new system was thus recalled to it.

A yet more efficient agency in absorbing the unemployed was found in the development of manufactures. The linen trade was as yet of small value, and that of silk-weaving was only just introduced. But the woollen manufacture was fast becoming an important element in the national wealth. England no longer sent her fleeces to be woven in Flanders and to be dyed at Florence. The spinning of yarn, the weaving, fulling, and dyeing of cloth, were spreading rapidly from the towns over the countryside. The worsted trade, of which Norwich was the centre, extended over the whole of the Eastern counties. Farmers' wives began everywhere to spin their wool from their own sheep's backs into a coarse "home-spun." The South and the West however still remained the great seats of industry and of wealth, for they were the homes of mining and manufacturing activity. The iron manufactures were limited to Kent and Sussex, though their prosperity in this quarter was already threatened by the growing scarcity of the wood which fed their furnaces, and by the exhaustion of the forests of the Weald. Cornwall was then, as now, the sole exporter of tin; and the exportation of its copper was just beginning. The broadcloths of the

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manu-
factures.*

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West claimed the palm among the woollen stuffs of England. The Cinque Ports held almost a monopoly of the commerce of the Channel. Every little harbour from the Foreland to the Land's End sent out its fleets of fishing boats, manned with bold seamen who were to furnish crews for Drake and the Buccaneers. Northern England still lagged far behind the rest of the realm in its industrial activity. But in the reign of Elizabeth the poverty and inaction to which it had been doomed for so many centuries began at last to be broken. We see the first sign of the revolution which has transferred English manufactures and English wealth to the north of the Mersey and of the Humber in the mention which now meets us of the friezes of Manchester, the coverlets of York, the cutlery of Sheffield, and the cloth-trade of Halifax.

*Growth of
commerce.*

The growth however of English commerce far outstripped as yet that of its manufactures. We must not judge of it by any modern standard; for the whole population of the country can hardly have exceeded five or six millions, and the burthen of all the vessels engaged in ordinary commerce was estimated at little more than fifty thousand tons. The size of the vessels employed in it would nowadays seem insignificant; a modern collier brig is probably as large as the biggest merchant vessel which then sailed from the port of London. But it was under Elizabeth that English commerce began the rapid career of development which has made us the carriers of the world. The foundation of the Royal Exchange at London by Sir Thomas Gresham in 1566 was a mark of the commercial progress of the time. By far the most important branch of our trade was the commerce with Flanders. Antwerp and Bruges were in fact the general marts of the world in the early part of the sixteenth century, and the annual export of English wool and drapery to their markets was estimated at a sum of more than two millions in value. But the religious troubles of the Netherlands were already scaring capital and industry from their older seats. As

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early as 1560 Philip's envoy reported to his master that "ten thousand of your Majesty's servants in the Low Countries are already in England with their preachers and ministers." Alva's severities soon raised the number of refugees to fifty thousand; and the outbreak of war which followed drove trade as well as traders from the Low Countries. It was with the ruin of Antwerp at the time of its siege and capture by the Duke of Parma that the commercial supremacy of our own capital was first established. A third of the merchants and manufacturers of the ruined city are said to have found a refuge on the banks of the Thames. The export trade to Flanders died away as London developed into the general mart of Europe, where the gold and sugar of the New World were found side by side with the cotton of India, the silks of the East, and the woollen stuffs of England itself.

Not only was much of the world's older trade transferred by this change to English shores, but the burst of national vigour which characterized the time found new outlets for its activity. The fisheries grew more and more valuable. Those of the Channel and the German Ocean gave occupation to the ports which lined the coast from Yarmouth to Plymouth Haven; while Bristol and Chester were rivals in the fisheries of Ulster. The merchant-navy of England was fast widening its sphere of commerce. The Venetian carrying fleet still touched at Southampton; but as far back as the reign of Henry the Seventh a commercial treaty had been concluded with Florence, and the trade with the Mediterranean which began under Richard the Third constantly took a wider development. The trade between England and the Baltic ports had hitherto been conducted by the Hanseatic merchants; but the extinction at this time of their London depot, the Steel Yard, was a sign that this trade too had now passed into English hands. The growth of Boston and Hull marked an increase of commercial intercourse with the Scandinavian states. The prosperity of Bristol, which

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depended in great measure on the trade with Ireland, was stimulated by the conquest and colonization of that island at the close of the Queen's reign and the beginning of her successor's. The dream of a northern passage to India opened up a trade with a land as yet unknown. Of three ships which sailed in the reign of Mary under Hugh Willoughby to discover this passage, two were found frozen with their crews and their hapless commander on the coast of Lapland; but the third, under Richard Chancellor, made its way safely to the White Sea and by the discovery of Archangel created the trade with Russia. A more lucrative traffic had already begun with the coast of Guinea, to whose gold dust and ivory the merchants of Southampton owed their wealth. The guilt of the Slave Trade which sprang out of it rests with John Hawkins. In 1562 he returned from the African coast with a cargo of negroes; and the arms, whose grant rewarded this achievement (a demi-moor, proper, bound with a cord), commemorated his priority in the transport of slaves to the labour-fields of the New World. But the New World was already furnishing more honest sources of wealth. The voyage of Sebastian Cabot from Bristol to the mainland of North America had called English vessels to the stormy ocean of the North. From the time of Henry the Eighth the number of English boats engaged on the cod-banks of Newfoundland steadily increased, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the seamen of Biscay found English rivals in the whale-fishery of the Polar seas.

General
comfort.

Elizabeth lent a ready patronage to the new commerce, she shared in its speculations, she considered its extension and protection as a part of public policy, and she sanctioned the formation of the great Merchant Companies which could alone secure the trader against wrong or injustice in distant countries. The Merchant-Adventurers of London, a body which had existed long before, and had received a charter of incorporation under Henry the Seventh, furnished a model for the Russia Company and the

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Company which absorbed the new commerce to the Indies. But it was not wholly with satisfaction that either the Queen or her ministers watched the social change which wealth was producing around them. They feared the increased expenditure and comfort which necessarily followed it, as likely to impoverish the land and to eat out the hardihood of the people. "England spendeth more on wines in one year," complained Cecil, "than it did in ancient times in four years." In the upper classes the lavishness of a new wealth combined with a lavishness of life, a love of beauty, of colour, of display, to revolutionize English dress. Men "wore a manor on their backs." The Queen's three thousand robes were rivalled in their bravery by the slashed velvets, the ruffs, the jewelled purpoints of the courtiers around her. But signs of the growing wealth were as evident in the lower class as in the higher. The disuse of salt-fish and the greater consumption of meat marked the improvement which had taken place among the country folk. Their rough and wattled farm houses were being superseded by dwellings of brick and stone. Pewter was replacing the wooden trenchers of the early yeomanry, and there were yeomen who could boast of a fair show of silver plate. It is from this period indeed that we can first date the rise of a conception which seems to us now a peculiarly English one, the conception of domestic comfort. The chimney-corner, so closely associated with family life, came into existence with the general introduction of chimneys, a feature rare in ordinary houses at the beginning of this reign. Pillows, which had before been despised by the farmer and the trader as fit only "for women in child-bed," were now in general use. Carpets superseded the filthy flooring of rushes. The loftier houses of the wealthier merchants, their parapeted fronts and costly wainscoting, their cumbrous but elaborate beds, their carved staircases, their quaintly figured gables, not only contrasted with the squalor which had till then characterized English towns,

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Architectural
change.

but marked the rise of a new middle class which was to play its part in later history.

A transformation of an even more striking kind marked the extinction of the feudal character of the noblesse. Gloomy walls and serried battlements disappeared from the dwellings of the gentry. The strength of the mediæval fortress gave way to the pomp and grace of the Elizabethan Hall. Knole, Longleat, Burleigh and Hatfield, Hardwick and Audley End, are familiar instances of a social as well as an architectural change which covered England with buildings where the thought of defence was abandoned for that of domestic comfort and refinement. We still gaze with pleasure on their picturesque line of gables, their fretted fronts, their gilded turrets and fanciful vanes, their castellated gateways, the jutting oriels from which the great noble looked down on his new Italian garden, on its stately terraces and broad flights of steps, its vases and fountains, its quaint mazes, its formal walks, its lines of yews cut into grotesque shapes in hopeless rivalry of the cypress avenues of the South. Nor was the change less within than without. The life of the Middle Ages concentrated itself in the vast castle hall, where the baron looked from his upper dais on the retainers who gathered at his board. But the great households were fast breaking up; and the whole feudal economy disappeared when the lord of the household withdrew with his family into his "parlour" or "withdrawing-room" and left the hall to his dependants. The Italian refinement of life which told on pleasance and garden told on the remodelling of the house within, raised the principal apartments to an upper floor—a change to which we owe the grand staircases of the time—surrounded the quiet courts by long "galleries of the presence," crowned the rude hearth with huge chimney-pieces adorned with fauns and cupids, with quaintly interlaced monograms and fantastic arabesques, hung tapestries on the walls, and crowded each chamber with quaintly carved chairs and costly

cabinets. The prodigal use of glass became a marked feature in the domestic architecture of the time, and one whose influence on the general health of the people can hardly be over-rated. Long lines of windows stretched over the fronts of the new manor halls. Every merchant's house had its oriel. "You shall have sometimes," Lord Bacon grumbled, "your houses so full of glass, that we cannot tell where to come to be out of the sun or the cold."

What Elizabeth contributed to this upgrowth of national prosperity was the peace and social order from which it sprang. While autos-de-fé were blazing at Rome and Madrid, while the Inquisition was driving the sober traders of the Netherlands to madness, while Scotland was tossing with religious strife, while the policy of Catharine secured for France but a brief respite from the horrors of civil war, England remained untroubled and at peace. Religious order was little disturbed. Recusants were few. There was little cry as yet for freedom of worship. Freedom of conscience was the right of every man. Persecution had ceased. It was only as the tale of a darker past that men recalled how ten years back heretics had been sent to the fire. Civil order was even more profound than religious order. The failure of the northern revolt proved the political tranquillity of the country. The social troubles from vagrancy and evictions were slowly passing away. Taxation was light. The country was firmly and steadily governed. The popular favour which had met Elizabeth at her accession was growing into a passionate devotion. Of her faults indeed England beyond the circle of her court knew little or nothing. The shiftings of her diplomacy were never seen outside the royal closet. The nation at large could only judge her foreign policy by its main outlines, by its temperance and good sense, and above all by its success. But every Englishman was able to judge Elizabeth in her rule at home, in her love of peace, her instinct of order, the firmness and moderation of her

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government, the judicious spirit of conciliation and compromise among warring factions which gave the country an unexampled tranquillity at a time when almost every other country in Europe was torn with civil war. Every sign of the growing prosperity, the sight of London as it became the mart of the world, of stately mansions as they rose on every manor, told, and justly told, in the Queen's favour. Her statue in the centre of the London Exchange was a tribute on the part of the merchant class to the interest with which she watched and shared personally in its enterprizes. Her thrift won a general gratitude. The memories of the Terror and of the Martyrs threw into bright relief the aversion from bloodshed which was conspicuous in her earlier reign, and never wholly wanting through its fiercer close. Above all there was a general confidence in her instinctive knowledge of the national temper. Her finger was always on the public pulse. She knew exactly when she could resist the feeling of her people, and when she must give way before the new sentiment of freedom which her policy unconsciously fostered. But when she retreated, her defeat had all the grace of victory; and the frankness and unreserve of her surrender won back at once the love that her resistance lost. Her attitude at home in fact was that of a woman whose pride in the well-being of her subjects and whose longing for their favour was the one warm touch in the coldness of her natural temper. If Elizabeth could be said to love anything, she loved England. "Nothing," she said to her first Parliament in words of unwonted fire, "nothing, no worldly thing under the sun, is so dear to me as the love and goodwill of my subjects." And the love and goodwill which were so dear to her she fully won.

*The
religious
truce.*

It was this personal devotion that enabled Elizabeth to face the religious difficulties of her reign. Formidable as these had been from its outset, they were now growing into actual dangers. The attack of the Papacy from

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without had deepened the tide of religious fanaticism within. For the nation at large Elizabeth's system was no doubt a wise and healthy one. Single-handed, unsupported by any of the statesmen or divines about her, the Queen had forced on the warring religions a sort of armed truce. While the main principles of the Reformation were accepted the zeal of the ultra-reformers was held at bay. Outer conformity, attendance at the common prayer, was exacted from all, but changes in ritual which would have drawn attention to the change in religion were steadily resisted. The Bible was left open. Public discussion was unrestrained. On the other hand the warfare of pulpit against pulpit was silenced by the licensing of preachers. In 1567 Elizabeth gave the Protestant zealots a rough proof that she would not suffer them to draw the Catholics into controversy and rouse the opposition to her system which controversy could not fail to bring with it. Parker's successor, Archbishop Grindal, who had been one of the Marian exiles and returned with much of the Calvinistic fanaticism, showed favour to a "liberty of prophesying" or preaching which would have flooded the realm with Protestant disputants. Elizabeth at once interposed. The "liberty of prophesying" was brought to an end; even the number of licensed preachers was curtailed; and the Primate himself was suspended from the exercise of his functions.

No stronger proof could have been given of the Queen's resolve to watch jealously over the religious peace of her realm. In her earlier years such a resolve went fairly with the general temper of the people at large. The mass of Englishmen remained true in sentiment to the older creed. But they conformed to the new worship. They shrank from any open defiance of the government. They shrank from reawakening the fierce strife of religions, of calling back the horsemen of Somerset or the fires of Mary. They saw little doctrinal difference between the new prayer and the old. Above all they trusted to patience. They had

*The
religious
change.*

CHAP. V. seen too many religious revolutions to believe that any
 England revolution would be lasting. They believed that the changes
 and the would be undone again as they had been undone before.
 Papacy. They held that Elizabeth was only acting under pressure,
 1567- and that her real inclination was towards the old religion.
 1576. They trusted in Philip's influence, in an Austrian marriage,
 in the Queen's dread of a breach with the Papacy, in the
 pressure of Mary Stuart. And meanwhile the years went
 by, and as the memories of the past became dimmer,
 and custom laid a heavier and heavier hand on the mass
 of men, and a new generation grew up that had never
 known the spell of Catholicism, the nation drifted from
 its older tradition and became Protestant in its own
 despite.

*The
 Puritan
 pressure.*

It was no doubt a sense that the religious truce was
 doing their work, as well as a dread of alienating the
 Queen and throwing her into the hands of their opponents
 by a more violent pressure, which brought the more
 zealous reformers to acquiesce through Elizabeth's earlier
 years in this system of compromise. But it was no sooner
 denounced by the Papacy than it was attacked by the
 Puritans. The rebellion of the Northern Earls, the with-
 drawal from the public worship, the Bull of Deposition,
 roused a fanatical zeal among the Calvinistic party which
 predominated in the Parliament of 1571. The move-
 ment in favour of a more pronounced Protestantism, of a
 more utter break with the Catholic past, which had slowly
 spread from the knot of exiles who returned to Geneva,
 now gathered a new strength; and a bill was brought in
 for the reform of the book of Common Prayer by the omis-
 sion of the practices which displeased the Genevan party
 among the clergy. A yet closer approach to the theocratic
 system of Calvin was seen when the Lower House refused
 its assent to a statute that would have bound the clergy
 to subscribe to those articles which recognized the royal
 supremacy, the power of the Church to ordain rites and
 ceremonies, and the actual form of church government.

At such a crisis even the weightiest statesmen at Elizabeth's
 council-board believed that in the contest with Rome the
 Crown would have to rely on Protestant zeal, and the
 influence of Cecil and Walsingham backed the pressure
 of the Parliament. But the Queen was only stirred to a
 burst of anger; she ordered Strickland, who had introduced
 the bill for liturgical reform, to appear no more in Parlia-
 ment, and though she withdrew the order as soon as she
 perceived the House was bent on his restoration, she
 would hear nothing of the changes on which the Commons
 were set.

Her resistance showed the sagacity with which the
 Queen caught the general temper of her people. The
 Catholic pressure had made it needful to exclude Catholics
 from the Commons and from the council-board, but a
 Protestant Council and a Protestant Parliament were
 by no means fair representatives of the general drift of
 English opinion. Her religious indifference left Elizabeth
 a better judge of the timid and hesitating advance of
 religious sentiment, of the stubborn clinging to the past,
 of the fear of change, of the dread of revolution, which
 made the winning of the people as a whole to the Reforma-
 tion a slow and tedious process. The Protestants were
 increasing in number, but they were still a minority of the
 nation. The zealous Catholics, who withdrew from church
 at the Pope's bidding, were a still smaller minority. The
 bulk of Englishmen were striving to cling to their re-
 ligious prejudice and to loyalty as well, to obey their con-
 science and their Queen at once, and in such a temper of
 men's minds any sudden and decisive change would have
 fallen like a thunderbolt. Elizabeth had no will to
 follow in the track of Rome, and to help the Pope to drive
 every waverer into action. Weakened and broken as it was,
 she clung obstinately to her system of compromise; and
 the general opinion gave her a strength which enabled her
 to resist the pressure of her council and her Parliament.
 So difficult however was her position that a change might

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*Elizabeth's
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Cart-
wright.

have been forced on her had she not been aided at this moment by a group of clerical bigots who gathered under the banner of Presbyterianism.

Of these Thomas Cartwright was the chief. He had studied at Geneva; he returned with a fanatical faith in Calvinism, and in the system of Church government which Calvin had devised; and as Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge he used to the full the opportunities which his chair gave him of propagating his opinions. No leader of a religious party ever deserved less of after sympathy. Cartwright was unquestionably learned and devout, but his bigotry was that of a mediæval inquisitor. The relics of the old ritual, the cross in baptism, the surplice, the giving of a ring in marriage, were to him not merely distasteful, as they were to the Puritans at large, they were idolatrous and the mark of the beast. His declamation against ceremonies and superstition however had little weight with Elizabeth or her Primates; what scared them was his reckless advocacy of a scheme of ecclesiastical government which placed the State beneath the feet of the Church. The absolute rule of bishops indeed Cartwright denounced as begotten of the devil; but the absolute rule of Presbyters he held to be established by the word of God. For the Church modelled after the fashion of Geneva he claimed an authority which surpassed the wildest dreams of the masters of the Vatican. All spiritual authority and jurisdiction, the decreeing of doctrine, the ordering of ceremonies, lay wholly in the hands of the ministers of the Church. To them belonged the supervision of public morals. In an ordered arrangement of classes and synods, these Presbyters were to govern their flocks, to regulate their own order, to decide in matters of faith, to administer "discipline." Their weapon was excommunication, and they were responsible for its use to none but Christ. The province of the civil ruler in such a system of religion as this was simply to carry out the decisions of

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the Presbyters, "to see their decrees executed and to punish the contemnors of them." Nor was this work of the civil power likely to be a light work. The spirit of Calvinistic Presbyterianism excluded all toleration of practice or belief. Not only was the rule of ministers to be established as the one legal form of Church government, but all other forms, Episcopalian and Separatist, were to be ruthlessly put down. For heresy there was the punishment of death. Never had the doctrine of persecution been urged with such a blind and reckless ferocity. "I deny," wrote Cartwright, "that upon repentance there ought to follow any pardon of death. . . . Heretics ought to be put to death now. If this be bloody and extreme, I am content to be so counted with the Holy Ghost." The violence of language such as this was as unlikely as the dogmatism of his theological teaching to commend Cartwright's opinions to the mass of Englishmen. Popular as the Presbyterian system became in Scotland, it never took any popular hold on England. It remained to the last a clerical rather than a national creed, and even in the moment of its seeming triumph under the Commonwealth it was rejected by every part of England save London and Lancashire. But the bold challenge which Cartwright's party delivered to the Government in 1572 in an "admonition to the Parliament," which denounced the government of bishops as contrary to the word of God and demanded the establishment in its place of government by Presbyters, raised a panic among English statesmen and prelates which cut off all hopes of a quiet treatment of the merely ceremonial questions which really troubled the consciences of the more advanced Protestants. The natural progress of opinion abruptly ceased, and the moderate thinkers who had pressed for a change in ritual which would have satisfied the zeal of the reformers withdrew from union with a party which revived the worst pretensions of the Papacy.

But the eyes of Elizabeth as of her subjects were

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drawn from difficulties at home to the conflict which took fresh fire oversea. In Europe, as in England, the tide of religious passion which had so long been held in check was now breaking over the banks which restrained it; and with this outbreak of forces before which the diplomacy and intrigues of its statesmen fell powerless the political face of Europe was changed. In 1572 the power of the King of Spain had reached its height. The Netherlands were at his feet. In the East his trouble from the pressure of the Turks seemed brought to an end by a brilliant victory at Lepanto in which his fleet with those of Venice and the Pope annihilated the fleet of the Sultan. He could throw his whole weight upon the Calvinism of the West, and above all upon France, where the Guises were fast sinking into mere partizans of Spain. The common danger drew France and England together; and Catharine of Medicis strove to bind the two countries in one political action by offering to Elizabeth the hand of her son Henry, the Duke of Anjou. But at this moment of danger the whole situation was changed by the rising of the Netherlands. Driven to despair by the greed and persecution of Alva, the Low Countries rose in a revolt which after strange alternations of fortune gave to the world the Republic of the United Provinces. Of the Protestants driven out by the Duke's cruelties, many had taken to the seas and cruized as pirates in the Channel, making war on Spanish vessels under the flag of the Prince of Orange. Like the Huguenot privateers who had sailed under Condé's flag, these freebooters found shelter in the English ports. But in the spring of 1572 Alva demanded their expulsion; and Elizabeth, unable to resist, sent them orders to put to sea. The Duke's success proved fatal to his master's cause. The "water-beggars," a little band of some two hundred and fifty men, were driven by stress of weather into the Meuse. There they seized the city of Brill, and repulsed a Spanish force which strove to recapture it. The repulse was the signal for a general rising.

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All the great cities of Holland and Zealand drove out their garrisons. The northern Provinces of Gelderland, Overijssel, and Friesland, followed their example, and by the summer half of the Low Countries were in revolt.

A yet greater danger threatened Alva in the south, where Mons had been surprized by Lewis of Nassau, and where the Calvinists were crying for support from the Huguenots of France. The opening which their rising afforded was seized by the Huguenot leaders as a political engine to break the power which Catharine of Medicis exercised over Charles the Ninth, and to set aside her policy of religious balance by placing France at the head of Protestantism in the West. Weak and passionate in temper, jealous of the warlike fame which his brother, the Duke of Anjou, had won at Montcontour, dreading above all the power of Spain and eager to grasp the opportunity of breaking it by a seizure of the Netherlands, Charles listened to the counsels of Coligni, who pressed for war upon Philip and promised the support of the Huguenots in an invasion of the Low Countries. Never had a fairer prospect opened to French ambition. But Catharine had no mind to be set aside. To her cool political temper the supremacy of the Huguenots seemed as fatal to the Crown as the supremacy of the Catholics. A triumph of Calvinism in the Netherlands, wrought out by the swords of the French Calvinists, would decide not only the religious but the political destinies of France; and Catharine saw ruin for the monarchy in a France at once Protestant and free. She suddenly united with the Guises and suffered them to rouse the fanatical mob of Paris, while she won back the King by picturing the royal power as about to pass into the hands of Coligni. On the twenty-fourth of August, St. Bartholomew's day, the plot broke out in an awful massacre. At Paris the populace murdered Coligni and almost all the Huguenot leaders. A hundred thousand Protestants fell as the fury spread from town to town. In that awful hour Philip and Catholicism were saved.

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The Spanish King laughed for joy. The new Pope, Gregory the Thirteenth, ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung. Instead of conquering the Netherlands France plunged madly back into a chaos of civil war, and the Low Countries were left to cope single-handed with the armies of Spain.

They could look for no help from Elizabeth. Whatever enthusiasm the heroic struggle of the Prince of Orange for their liberties excited among her subjects, it failed to move Elizabeth even for an instant from the path of cold self-interest. To her the revolt of the Netherlands was simply "a bridle of Spain, which kept war out of our own gate." At the darkest moment of the contest, when Alva had won back all but Holland and Zeeland and even William of Orange despaired, the Queen bent her energies to prevent him from finding succour in France. That the Low Countries could in the end withstand Philip, neither she nor any English statesmen believed. They held that the struggle must close either in their subjection to him, or in their selling themselves for aid to France; and the accession of power which either result must give to one of her two Catholic foes the Queen was eager to avert. Her plan for averting it was by forcing the Provinces to accept the terms which were now offered by Alva's successor, Requesens, a restoration of their constitutional privileges on condition of their submission to the Church. Peace on such a footing would not only restore English commerce, which suffered from the war; it would leave the Netherlands still formidable as a weapon against Philip. The freedom of the Provinces would be saved; and the religious question involved in a fresh submission to the yoke of Catholicism was one which Elizabeth was incapable of appreciating. To her the steady refusal of William the Silent to sacrifice his faith was as unintelligible as the steady bigotry of Philip in demanding such a sacrifice. It was of more immediate consequence that Philip's anxiety to avoid provoking an intervention on the part of England left Elizabeth tranquil at home. The policy of

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Requesens after Alva's departure at the close of 1573 was a policy of pacification; and with the steady resistance of the Netherlands still foiling his efforts Philip saw that his one hope of success rested on the avoidance of intervention from without. The civil war which followed the massacre of St. Bartholomew removed all danger of such an intervention on the side of France. A weariness of religious strife enabled Catharine again to return to her policy of toleration in the summer of 1573; but though the death of Charles the Ninth and accession of his brother Henry the Third in the following year left the Queen-mother's power unbroken, the balance she preserved was too delicate to leave room for any schemes without the realm.

English intervention it was yet more needful to avoid; and the hopes of an attack upon England which Rome had drawn from Philip's fanaticism were thus utterly blasted. To the fiery exhortations of Gregory the Thirteenth the King only answered by counsels of delay. But Rome could not delay her efforts. All her hopes of recovering England lay in the Catholic sympathies of the mass of Englishmen, and every year that went by weakened her chance of victory. The firm refusal of Elizabeth to suffer the Puritans to break in with any violent changes on her ecclesiastical policy was justified by its slow but steady success. Silently, almost unconsciously, England became Protestant as the traditionary Catholicism which formed the religion of three-fourths of the people at the Queen's accession died quietly away. At the close of her reign the only parts of England where the old faith retained anything of its former vigour were the north and the extreme west, at that time the poorest and least populated parts of the kingdom. One main cause of the change lay in the gradual dying out or removal of the Catholic priesthood and the growth of a new Protestant clergy who supplied their place. The older parish priests, though they had almost to a man acquiesced in the changes of ritual and doctrine which the

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various phases of the Reformation imposed upon them, remained in heart utterly hostile to its spirit. As Mary had undone the changes of Edward, they hoped for a Catholic successor to undo the changes of Elizabeth; and in the meantime they were content to wear the surplice instead of the chasuble, and to use the Communion office instead of the Mass-book. But if they were forced to read the Homilies from the pulpit the spirit of their teaching remained unchanged; and it was easy for them to cast contempt on the new services, till they seemed to old-fashioned worshippers a mere "Christmas game." But the lapse of years did its work in emptying parsonage after parsonage. In 1579 the Queen felt strong enough to enforce for the first time a general compliance with the Act of Uniformity; and the jealous supervision of Parker and the bishops ensured an inner as well as an outer conformity to the established faith in the clergy who took the place of the dying priesthood. The new parsons were for the most part not merely Protestant in belief and teaching, but ultra-Protestant. The old restrictions on the use of the pulpit were silently removed as the need for them passed away, and the zeal of the young ministers showed itself in an assiduous preaching which moulded in their own fashion the religious ideas of the new generation. But their character had even a greater influence than their preaching. Under Henry the priests had in large part been ignorant and sensual men; and the character of the clergy appointed by the greedy Protestants under Edward or at the opening of Elizabeth's reign was even worse than that of their Catholic rivals. But the energy of the successive Primates, seconded as it was by the general increase of zeal and morality at the time, did its work; and by the close of the Queen's reign the moral temper as well as the social character of the clergy had greatly changed. Scholars like Hooker could now be found in the ranks of the priesthood, and the grosser scandals which disgraced the clergy as

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a body for the most part disappeared. It was impossible for a Puritan libeller to bring against the ministers of Elizabeth's reign the charges of drunkenness and immorality which Protestant libellers had been able to bring against the priesthood of Henry's.

But the influence of the new clergy was backed by a general revolution in English thought. The grammar schools were diffusing a new knowledge and mental energy through the middle classes and among the country gentry. The tone of the Universities, no unfair test of the tone of the nation at large, changed wholly as the Queen's reign went on. At its opening Oxford was "a nest of Papists" and sent its best scholars to feed the Catholic seminaries. At its close the University was a hot-bed of Puritanism, where the fiercest tenets of Calvin reigned supreme. The movement was no doubt hastened by the political circumstances of the time. Under the rule of Elizabeth loyalty became more and more a passion among Englishmen; and the Bull of Deposition placed Rome in the forefront of Elizabeth's foes. The conspiracies which festered around Mary were laid to the Pope's charge; he was known to be pressing on France and on Spain the invasion and conquest of the heretic kingdom; he was soon to bless the Armada. Every day made it harder for a Catholic to reconcile Catholicism with loyalty to his Queen or devotion to his country; and the mass of men, who are moved by a sentiment rather than by reason, swung slowly round to the side which, whatever its religious significance might be, was the side of patriotism, of liberty against tyranny, of England against Spain. A new impulse was given to this silent drift of religious opinion by the atrocities which marked the Catholic triumph on the other side of the Channel. The horror of Alva's butcheries or of the massacre in Paris on St. Bartholomew's day revived the memories of the bloodshed under Mary. The tale of Protestant sufferings was told with a wonderful pathos and picturesqueness

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by John Foxe, an exile during the persecution; and his "Book of Martyrs," which was set up by royal order in the churches for public reading, passed from the churches to the shelves of every English household. The trading classes of the towns had been the first to embrace the doctrines of the Reformation, but their Protestantism became a passion as the refugees of the Continent brought to shop and market their tale of outrage and blood. Thousands of Flemish exiles found a refuge in the Cinque Ports, a third of the Antwerp merchants were seen pacing the new London Exchange, and a Church of French Huguenots found a home which it still retains in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral.

But the decay of Catholicism appealed strongly to the new spirit of Catholic zeal which, in its despair of aid from Catholic princes, was girding itself for its own bitter struggle with heresy. Pius the Fifth had now passed away, but the policy of the Papal court remained unchanged. His successor, Gregory the Thirteenth, showed the same restless zeal, the same world-wide energy in the work of winning back the nations to the Catholic Church. Rome was still the centre of the Catholic crusade. It wielded material as well as spiritual arms. If the Papacy had ceased to be a military power, it remained a financial power. Taxes were multiplied, expenses reduced, estates confiscated, free towns reduced to servitude, with the one aim of enabling Gregory and his successors to build up a vast system of loans which poured the wealth of Europe into the treasury of Catholicism. It was the treasure of the Vatican which financed the Catholic movement. Subsidies from the Papacy fitted out the fleet that faced the Turk at Lepanto, and gathered round the Guises their lance-knights from the Rhine. Papal supplies equipped expeditions against Ireland, and helped Philip to bear the cost of the Armada. It was the Papal exchequer which supported the world-wide diplomacy that was carrying on negotiations in Sweden and intrigues in

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Poland, goading the lukewarm Emperor to action or quickening the sluggish movements of Spain, plotting the ruin of Geneva or the assassination of Orange, stirring up revolt in England and civil war in France. It was the Papacy that bore the cost of the religious propaganda that was fighting its stubborn battle with Calvinist and Lutheran on the Rhine and the Elbe, or sending its missionaries to win back the lost isle of the west. As early as 1568 Dr. Allen, a scholar who had been driven from Oxford by the test prescribed in the Act of Uniformity, had foreseen the results of the dying out of the Marian priests, and had set up a seminary at Douay to supply their place. The new college was liberally supported by the Catholic peers, and supplied with pupils by a stream of refugees from Oxford and the English grammar schools. Three years after its opening the college numbered a hundred and fifty members. It was in these "seminary priests" that Gregory the Thirteenth saw the means of reviving Catholic zeal in England, and at the Pope's bidding they began in 1576 to pass over to English shores.

Few as the new comers were at first, their presence was at once felt in the check which it gave to the gradual reconciliation of the Catholic gentry to the English Church. No check could have been more galling to Elizabeth, and her resentment was quickened by the sense of danger. Rome had set itself in the forefront of her foes. She had accepted the issue of the Bull of Deposition as a declaration of war on the part of the Papacy, and she viewed the Douay priests with some justice as its political emissaries. The comparative security of the Catholics from active persecution during the early part of her reign had arisen, partly from the sympathy and connivance of the gentry who acted as justices of the peace, and still more from her own religious indifference. But the Test Act placed the magistracy in Protestant hands; and as Elizabeth passed from indifference to suspicion and from suspicion to terror she put less restraint on the bigotry

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around her. In quitting Eaton Hall which she had visited in one of her pilgrimages the Queen gave its master, young Rookwood, thanks for his entertainment and her hand to kiss. "But my Lord Chamberlain nobly and gravely understanding that Rookwood was excommunicate" for non-attendance at church "called him before him, demanded of him how he durst presume to attempt her royal presence, he unfit to accompany any Christian person, forthwith said that he was fitter for a pair of stocks, commanded him out of Court, and yet to attend the Council's pleasure." The Council's pleasure was seen in his committal to the town prison at Norwich, while "seven more gentlemen of worship" were fortunate enough to escape with a simple sentence of arrest at their own homes. The Queen's terror became a panic in the nation at large. The few priests who landed from Douay were multiplied into an army of Papal emissaries despatched to sow treason and revolt throughout the land. Parliament, which the working of the Test Act had made a wholly Protestant body, save for the presence of a few Catholics among the peers, was summoned to meet the new danger, and declared by formal statute the landing of these priests and the harbouring of them to be treason. The Act proved no idle menace; and the execution of Cuthbert Mayne, a young priest who was arrested in Cornwall with the Papal Bull of Deposition hidden about him, gave a terrible indication of the character of the struggle upon which Elizabeth was about to enter.

Don John
of
Austria.

The execution of Cuthbert Mayne was far from being purposed as the opening of a religious persecution. To modern eyes there is something even more revolting than open persecution in a policy which branded every Catholic priest as a traitor and all Catholic worship as disloyalty; but the first step towards toleration was won when the Queen rested her system of repression on purely political grounds. If Elizabeth was a persecutor, she was the first English ruler who felt the charge of religious persecution to be a

stigma on her rule. Nor can it be denied that there was a real political danger in the new missionaries. Allen was a restless conspirator, and the work of his seminary priests was meant to aid a new plan of the Papacy for the conquest of England. In 1576, on the death of Requesens, the Spanish governor of the Low Countries, a successor was found for him in Don John of Austria, a natural brother of Philip, the victor of Lepanto, and the most famous general of his day. The temper of Don John was daring and ambitious; his aim was a crown; and he sought in the Netherlands the means of winning one. His ambition lent itself easily to the schemes of Mary Stuart and of Rome; and he resolved to bring about by quick concessions a settlement in the Low Countries, to cross with the Spanish forces employed there to England, to raise the Catholics in revolt, to free and marry Mary Stuart, and reign in her right as an English king. The plan was an able one; but it was foiled ere he reached his post. The Spanish troops had mutinied on the death of Requesens; and their sack of Antwerp drew the States of the Netherlands together in a "Pacification of Ghent." All differences of religion were set aside in a common purpose to drive out the stranger. Baffled as he was, the subtlety of Don John turned even this league to account. Their demand for the withdrawal of the Spanish troops, though fatal to Philip's interests in the Low Countries, could be made to serve the interests of Don John across the seas. In February, 1577, therefore he ratified the Pacification of Ghent, consented to the maintenance of the liberties of the States, and engaged to withdraw the army. He stipulated only for its withdrawal by sea, and for a delay of three months, which was needful for the arrangement of his descent on the English coast. Both demands however were refused; he was forced to withdraw his troops at once and by land, and the scheme of the Papacy found itself utterly foiled.

Secret as were the plans of Don John, Elizabeth had

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CHAP. V. seen how near danger had drawn to her. Fortune once more proved her friend, for the efforts of Don John to bring about a reconciliation of the Netherlands proved fruitless, and negotiations soon passed again into the clash of arms. But the Queen was warned at last. On the new outbreak of war in 1577 she allied herself with the States and sent them money and men. Such a step, though not in form an act of hostility against Philip, for the Provinces with which she leagued herself still owned themselves as Philip's subjects, was a measure which proved the Queen's sense of her need of the Netherlands. Though she had little sympathy with their effort for freedom, she saw in them "the one bridle to Spain to keep war out of our own gate." But she was to see the war drift nearer and nearer to her shores. Now that the Netherlands were all but lost Philip's slow stubborn temper strung itself to meet the greatness of the peril. The Spanish army was reinforced; and in January, 1578, it routed the army of the States on the field of Gemblours. The sickness and death of Don John arrested its progress for a few months; but his successor, Philip's nephew, Alexander Farnese, the Prince of Parma, soon proved his greatness whether as a statesman or a general. He seized on the difference of faith between the Catholic and Protestant States as a means of division. The Pacification of Ghent was broken at the opening of 1579 by the secession of the Walloon provinces of the southern border. It was only by a new league of the seven northern provinces, where Protestantism was dominant, in the Union of Utrecht that William of Orange could meet Parma's stroke. But the general union of the Low Countries was fatally broken, and from this moment the ten Catholic states passed one by one into the hands of Spain.

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The new vigour of Philip in the West marked a change in the whole policy of Spain. Till now, in spite of endless provocations, Philip had clung to the English alliance. Fear of Elizabeth's union with France, dread of her help to

the Netherlands, had steeled him to bear patiently her defiance of his counsels, her neglect of his threats, her seizure of his treasure, her persecution of the Catholic party which looked to him as its head. But patience had only been met by fresh attacks. The attempt of Don John had spurred Elizabeth to ally herself to France. She was expected every hour to marry the Duke of Anjou. She had given friendship and aid to the revolted provinces. Above all her freebooters were carrying war into the far Pacific, and challenging the right of Spain to the New World of the West. Philip drifted whether he would or no into a position of hostility. He had not forbidden the projects of Don John; he at last promised aid to the projects of Rome. In 1579 the Papacy planned the greatest and most comprehensive of its attacks upon Elizabeth. If the Catholic powers still hesitated and delayed, Rome was resolute to try its own strength in the West. The spiritual reconciliation of England was not enough. However successful the efforts of the seminary priests might prove they would leave Elizabeth on the throne, and the reign of Elizabeth was a defeat to the Papacy. In issuing its Bull of Deposition Rome had staked all on the ruin of the Queen, and even if England became Catholic Gregory could not suffer his spiritual subjects to obey a ruler whom his sentence had declared an unlawful possessor of the throne. And now that the temper of Spain promised more vigorous action Rome could pave the way for a landing of Philip's troops by stirring up a threefold danger for Elizabeth. While fresh and more vigorous missionaries egged on the English Catholics to revolt the Pope hastened to bring about a Catholic revolution in Scotland and a Catholic insurrection in Ireland.

In Ireland Sidney's victory had been followed by ten years of peace. Had the land been left to itself there would have been nothing more than the common feuds and disturbances of the time. The policy of driving its people to despair by seizing their lands for English

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CHAP. V. settlements had been abandoned since Mary's day. The religious question had hardly any practical existence. On the Queen's accession indeed the ecclesiastical policy of the Protestants had been revived in name; Rome was again renounced; the Act of Uniformity forced on the island the use of the English Prayer-book and compelled attendances at the services where it was used. There was as before a general air of compliance with the law. Even in the districts without the Pale the bishops generally conformed; and the only exceptions of which we have any information were to be found in the extreme south and in the north, where resistance was distant enough to be safe. But the real cause of this apparent submission to the Act of Uniformity lay in the fact that it remained, and necessarily remained, a dead letter. It was impossible to find any considerable number of English ministers, or of Irish priests acquainted with English. Meath was one of the most civilized dioceses of the island, and out of a hundred curates in it hardly ten knew any tongue save their own. The promise that the service-book should be translated into Irish was never carried out, and the final clause of the Act itself authorized the use of a Latin rendering of it till further order could be taken. But this, like its other provisions, was ignored; and throughout Elizabeth's reign the gentry of the Pale went unquestioned to Mass. There was in fact no religious persecution, and in the many complaints of Shane O'Neill we find no mention of a religious grievance.

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But this was far from being the view of Rome or of Spain, of the Catholic missionaries, or of the Irish exiles abroad. They represented and perhaps believed the Irish people to be writhing under a religious oppression which it was burning to shake off. They saw in the Irish loyalty to Catholicism a lever for overthrowing the heretic Queen. Stukely, an Irish refugee, had pressed on the Pope and Spain as early as 1571 the policy of a descent on Ireland; and though a force gathered in 1578 by

the Pope for this purpose was diverted to a mad crusade against the Moors, his plans were carried out in 1579 by the landing of a few soldiers under the brother of the Earl of Desmond, James Fitzmaurice, on the coast of Kerry. The Irish however held aloof, and Fitzmaurice fell in a skirmish; but the revolt of the Earl of Desmond gave fresh hope of success, and the rising was backed by the arrival in 1580 of two thousand Papal soldiers "in five great ships." These mercenaries were headed by an Italian captain, San Giuseppe, and accompanied by a Papal Legate, the Jesuit Sanders, who brought plenary indulgence for all who joined the sacred enterprize and threats of damnation for all who resisted it. "What will you answer to the Pope's treatment," ran his letter to the Irish, "when he, bringing us the Pope's and other Catholic princes' aid, shall charge you with the crime and pain of heretics for maintaining an heretical pretended Queen against the public sentence of Christ's vicar? Can she with her feigned supremacy absolve and acquit you from the Pope's excommunication and curse?" The news of the landing of this force stirred in England a Protestant frenzy that foiled the scheme for a Catholic marriage with the Duke of Anjou; while Elizabeth, panic-stricken, urged the French King to save her from Philip by an invasion of the Netherlands. But the danger passed quickly away. The Papal attempt ended in a miserable failure. The fort of Smerwick, in which the invaders entrenched themselves, was forced to surrender, and its garrison put ruthlessly to the sword. The Earl of Desmond, who after long indecision rose to support them, was defeated and hunted over his own country, which the panic-born cruelty of his pursuers harried into a wilderness.

Pitiless as it was, the work done in Munster spread a terror over Ireland which served England in good stead when the struggle of Catholicism culminated in the fight with the Armada; and not a chieftain stirred during that memorable year save to massacre the miserable men who were shipwrecked along the coast of Bantry or Sligo,

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But the Irish revolt did much to give fresh strength to the panic which the efforts of the seminary priests had roused in England. This was raised to frenzy by news that to the efforts of the seminary priests were now added those of Jesuit missionaries. Pope Gregory had resolved to support his military effort in Ireland by a fresh missionary effort in England itself. Philip would only promise to invade England if the co-operation of its Catholics was secured; and the aim of the new mission was to prepare them for revolt. While the force of San Giuseppe was being equipped for Kerry a young convert, William Gilbert, was despatched to form a Catholic association in England; among whose members the chief were afterwards found engaged in conspiracies for the death of Elizabeth or sharing in the Gunpowder Plot. As soon as this was organized, as many as fifty priests, if we may trust Allen's statement, were sent to land secretly on the coast. They were headed by two men of remarkable talents and energy. A large number of the Oxford refugees at Douay had joined the Order of Jesus, whose members were already famous for their blind devotion to the will and judgements of Rome; and the two ablest and most eloquent of these exiles, Campian, once a fellow of St. John's, and Parsons, once a fellow of Balliol, were despatched in the spring of 1580 as the heads of a Jesuit mission in England. Their special aim was to win the nobility and gentry to the Church, and for the moment their success seemed overwhelming. "It is supposed," wrote Allen triumphantly, "that there are twenty thousand more Catholics this year than last." The eagerness shown to hear Campian was so great that in spite of the rewards offered for his arrest by the Government he was able to preach with hardly a show of concealment to a large audience at Smithfield. From London the Jesuits wandered in the disguise of captains or serving-men, sometimes even in the cassocks of the English clergy, through many of the counties; and wherever they went

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the zeal of the Catholic gentry revived. The list of nobles won back to the older faith by these wandering apostles was headed by the name of Lord Oxford, Cecil's own son-in-law, and the proudest among English peers.

Their success in undoing the Queen's work of compromise was shown in a more public way by the growing withdrawal of the Catholics from attendance at the worship of the English Church. It was plain that a fierce religious struggle was at hand, and men felt that behind this lay a yet fiercer political struggle. Philip's hosts were looming over sea, and the horrors of foreign invasion seemed about to be added to the horrors of civil war. The panic of the Protestants and of the Parliament outran even the real greatness of the danger. The little group of missionaries was magnified by popular fancy into a host of disguised Jesuits; and the invasion of this imaginary host was met by the seizure and torture of as many priests as the government could lay hands on, the imprisonment of recusants, the securing of the prominent Catholics throughout the country, and by the assembling of Parliament at the opening of 1581. An Act "to retain the Queen's Majesty's subjects in due obedience" prohibited the saying of Mass even in private houses, increased the fine on recusants to twenty pounds a month, and enacted that "all persons pretending to any power of absolving subjects from their allegiance, or practising to withdraw them to the Romish religion, with all persons after the present session willingly so absolved or reconciled to the See of Rome, shall be guilty of High Treason." The way in which the vast powers conferred on the Crown by this statute were used by Elizabeth was not only characteristic in itself, but important as at once defining the policy to which, in theory at least, her successors adhered for more than a hundred years. No layman was brought to the bar or to the block under its provisions. The oppression of the Catholic gentry was limited to an exaction, more or less rigorous at different times, of the fines for recusancy

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OR non-attendance at public worship. The work of bloodshed was reserved wholly for priests, and under Elizabeth this work was done with a ruthless energy which for the moment crushed the Catholic reaction. The Jesuits were tracked by pursuivants and spies, dragged from their hiding-places, and sent in batches to the Tower. So hot was the pursuit that Parsons was forced to fly across the Channel; while Campian was arrested in July 1581, brought a prisoner through the streets of London amidst the howling of the mob, and placed at the bar on the charge of treason. "Our religion only is our crime," was a plea which galled his judges; but the political danger of the Jesuit preaching was disclosed in his evasion of any direct reply when questioned as to his belief in the validity of the excommunication or deposition of the Queen by the Papal See, and after much hesitation he was executed as a traitor.

The
Catholic
resistance.

Rome was now at open war with England. Even the more conservative Englishmen looked on the Papacy as the first among England's foes. In striving to enforce the claims of its temporal supremacy, Rome had roused against it that national pride which had battled with it even in the middle ages. From that hour therefore the cause of Catholicism was lost. England became Protestant in heart and soul when Protestantism became identified with patriotism. But it was not to Protestantism only that this attitude of Rome and the policy it forced on the Government gave a new impulse. The death of Campian was the prelude to a steady, pitiless effort at the extermination of his class. If we adopt the Catholic estimate of the time, the twenty years which followed saw the execution of two hundred priests, while a yet greater number perished in the filthy and fever-stricken gaols into which they were plunged. The work of reconciliation to Rome was arrested by this ruthless energy; but, on the other hand, the work which the priests had effected could not be undone. The system of quiet compulsion and

conciliation to which Elizabeth had trusted for the religious reunion of her subjects was foiled; and the English Catholics, fined, imprisoned at every crisis of national danger, and deprived of their teachers by the prison and the gibbet, were severed more hopelessly than ever from the national Church. A fresh impulse was thus given to the growing current of opinion which was to bring England at last to recognize the right of every man to freedom both of conscience and of worship. "In Henry's days, the father of this Elizabeth," wrote a Catholic priest at this time, "the whole kingdom with all its bishops and learned men abjured their faith at one word of the tyrant. But now in his daughter's days boys and women boldly profess the faith before the judge, and refuse to make the slightest concession even at the threat of death." What Protestantism had first done under Mary, Catholicism was doing under Elizabeth. It was deepening the sense of personal religion. It was revealing in men who had till now cowered before the might of kingship a power greater than the might of kings. It was breaking the spell which the monarchy had laid on the imagination of the people. The Crown ceased to seem irresistible when "boys and women" dared to resist it: it lost its mysterious sacredness when half the nation looked on their sovereign as a heretic. The "divinity that doth hedge a king" was rudely broken in upon when Jesuit libellers were able to brand the wearer of the crown not only as a usurper but as a profligate and abandoned woman. The mighty impulse of patriotism, of national pride, which rallied the whole people round Elizabeth as the Armada threatened England or Drake threatened Spain, shielded indeed Elizabeth from much of the natural results of this drift of opinion. But with her death the new sentiment started suddenly to the front. The divine right of kings, the divine right of bishops, found themselves face to face with a passion for religious and political liberty which had gained vigour from the dungeon of the Catholic priest as from that of the Protestant zealot.

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England
and the
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CHAPTER VI.

ENGLAND AND SPAIN.

1582—1593.

*The
popular
passion.*

THE work of the Jesuits, the withdrawal of the Catholics from the Churches, the panic of the Protestants, were signs that the control of events was passing from the hands of statesmen and diplomatists. The long period of suspense which Elizabeth's policy had won was ending in the clash of national and political passions. The rising fanaticism of the Catholic world was breaking down the caution and hesitation of Philip; while England was setting aside the balanced neutrality of her Queen and pushing boldly forward to a contest which it felt to be inevitable. The public opinion, to which Elizabeth was so sensitive, took every day a bolder and more decided tone. Her cold indifference to the heroic struggle in Flanders was more than compensated by the enthusiasm it roused among the nation at large. The earlier Flemish refugees found a home in the Cinque Ports. The exiled merchants of Antwerp were welcomed by the merchants of London. While Elizabeth dribbled out her secret aid to the Prince of Orange, the London traders sent him half-a-million from their own purses, a sum equal to a year's revenue of the Crown. Volunteers stole across the Channel in increasing numbers to the aid of the Dutch, till the five hundred Englishmen who fought in the beginning of the struggle rose to a brigade of five thousand, whose bravery

turned one of the most critical battles of the war. Dutch privateers found shelter in English ports, and English vessels hoisted the flag of the States for a dash at the Spanish traders. Protestant fervour rose steadily among Englishmen as "the best captains and soldiers" returned from the campaigns in the Low Countries to tell of Alva's atrocities, or as privateers brought back tales of English seamen who had been seized in Spain and the New World, to linger amidst the tortures of the Inquisition, or to die in its fires. In the presence of this steady drift of popular passion the diplomacy of Elizabeth became of little moment. If the Queen was resolute for peace, England was resolute for war. A new daring had arisen since the beginning of her reign, when Cecil and Elizabeth stood alone in their belief in England's strength, and when the diplomatists of Europe regarded her obstinate defiance of Philip's counsels as "madness." The whole English people had caught the self-confidence and daring of their Queen.

It was the instinct of liberty as well as of Protestantism that drove England forward to a conflict with Philip of Spain. Spain was at this moment the mightiest of European powers. The discoveries of Columbus had given it the New World of the West; the conquests of Cortes and Pizarro poured into its treasury the plunder of Mexico and Peru; its galleons brought the rich produce of the Indies, their gold, their jewels, their ingots of silver, to the harbour of Cadiz. To the New World the Spanish King added the fairest and wealthiest portions of the Old; he was master of Naples and Milan, the richest and most fertile districts of Italy; in spite of revolt he was still lord of the busy provinces of the Low Countries, of Flanders, the great manufacturing district of the time, and of Antwerp, which had become the central mart for the commerce of the world. His native kingdom, poor as it was, supplied him with the steadiest and the most daring soldiers that Europe had seen since the fall of the Roman Empire. The renown of the Spanish infantry had been growing from

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—
England
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—
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—

Spain.

CHAP. VI. the day when it flung off the onset of the French chivalry
 on the field of Ravenna; and the Spanish generals stood
 without rivals in their military skill, as they stood without
 rivals in their ruthless cruelty.

England
 and Spain.

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Philip.

The whole too of this enormous power was massed in the hands of a single man. Served as he was by able statesmen and subtle diplomatists, Philip of Spain was his own sole minister; labouring day after day, like a clerk, through the long years of his reign, amidst the papers which crowded his closet; but resolute to let nothing pass without his supervision, and to suffer nothing to be done save by his express command. His scheme of rule differed widely from that of his father. Charles had held the vast mass of his dominions by a purely personal bond. He chose no capital, but moved ceaselessly from land to land; he was a German in the Empire, a Spaniard in Castille, a Netherlander in the Netherlands. But in the hands of Philip his father's heritage became a Spanish realm. His capital was fixed at Madrid. The rest of his dominions sank into provinces of Spain, to be governed by Spanish viceroys, and subordinated to the policy and interests of a Spanish minister. All local liberties, all varieties of administration, all national differences were set aside for a monotonous despotism which was wielded by Philip himself. It was his boast that everywhere in the vast compass of his dominions he was "an absolute king." It was to realize this idea of unshackled power that he crushed the liberties of Aragon, as his father had crushed the liberties of Castille, and sent Alva to tread under foot the constitutional freedom of the Low Countries. His bigotry went hand in hand with his thirst for rule. Catholicism was the one common bond that knit his realms together, and policy as well as religious faith made Philip the champion of Catholicism. Italy and Spain lay hushed beneath the terror of the Inquisition, while Flanders was being purged of heresy by the stake and the sword.

Philip
 and
 Elizabeth.

The shadow of this gigantic power fell like a deadly blight

over Europe. The new Protestantism, like the new spirit of political liberty, saw its real foe in Philip. It was Spain, rather than the Guises, against which Coligni and the Huguenots struggled in vain; it was Spain with which William of Orange was wrestling for religious and civil freedom; it was Spain which was soon to plunge Germany into the chaos of the Thirty Years' War, and to which the Catholic world had for twenty years been looking, and looking in vain, for a victory over heresy in England. Vast in fact as Philip's resources were, they were drained by the yet vaster schemes of ambition into which his religion and his greed of power, as well as the wide distribution of his dominions, perpetually drew him. To coerce the weaker States of Italy, to command the Mediterranean, to keep a hold on the African coast, to preserve his influence in Germany, to support Catholicism in France, to crush heresy in Flanders, to despatch one Armada against the Turk and another against England, were aims mighty enough to exhaust even the power of the Spanish monarchy. But it was rather on the character of Philip than on the exhaustion of his treasury that Elizabeth counted for success in the struggle which had so long been going on between them. The King's temper was slow, cautious even to timidity, losing itself continually in delays, in hesitations, in anticipating remote perils, in waiting for distant chances; and on the slowness and hesitation of his temper his rival had been playing ever since she mounted the throne. The agility, the sudden changes or Elizabeth, her lies, her mystifications, though they failed to deceive Philip, puzzled and impeded his mind. The diplomatic contest between the two was like the fight which England was soon to see between the ponderous Spanish galleon and the light pinnacle of the buccaneers.

But amidst all the cloud of intrigue which disguised their policy, the actual course of their relations had been clear and simple. In the earlier years of Elizabeth Philip had been driven to her alliance by his fear of France and his

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Philip's
 policy.

CHAP. VI. dread of the establishment of a French supremacy over
 England and Scotland through the accession of Mary
 Stuart. As time went on, the discontent and rising of
 the Netherlands made it of hardly less import to avoid
 a strife with the Queen. Had revolt in England prospered,
 or Mary Stuart succeeded in her countless plots, or Eliza-
 beth fallen beneath an assassin's knife, Philip was ready
 to have struck in and reaped the fruits of other men's
 labours. But his stake was too vast to risk an attack
 while the Queen sate firmly on her throne; and the cry
 of the English Catholics, or the pressure of the Pope,
 failed to drive the Spanish King into strife with Elizabeth.
 But as the tide of religious passion which had so long
 been held in check broke over its banks the political
 face of Europe changed. Philip had less to dread from
 France or from an English alliance with France. The
 abstinence of Elizabeth from intervention in the Nether-
 lands was neutralized by the intervention of the English
 people. Above all, the English hostility threatened Philip
 in a quarter where he was more sensitive than elsewhere,
 his dominion in the West.

*Spain and
the New
World.* Foiled as the ambition of Charles the Fifth had been
 in the Old World, his empire had widened with every
 year in the New. At his accession to the throne the
 Spanish rule had hardly spread beyond the Island of St.
 Domingo, which Columbus had discovered twenty years
 before. But greed and enterprize drew Cortes to the main-
 land, and in 1521 his conquest of Mexico added a realm of
 gold to the dominions of the Emperor. Ten years later the
 great empire of Peru yielded to the arms of Pizarro. With
 the conquest of Chili the whole western coast of South
 America passed into the hands of Spain; and successive
 expeditions planted the Spanish flag at point upon point
 along the coast of the Atlantic from Florida to the river
 Plate. A Papal grant had conveyed the whole of America
 to the Spanish crown, and fortune seemed for long years
 to ratify the judgement of the Vatican. No European

CHAP. VI. nation save Portugal disputed the possession of the New
 World, and Portugal was too busy with its discoveries in
 Africa and India to claim more than the territory of Brazil.
 Though Francis the First sent seamen to explore the
 American coast, his ambition found other work at home;
 and a Huguenot colony which settled in Florida was cut
 to pieces by the Spaniards. Only in the far north did a
 few French settlers find rest beside the waters of the St.
 Lawrence. England had reached the mainland even earlier
 than Spain, for before Columbus touched its shores Sebas-
 tian Cabot, a seaman of Genoese blood but born and bred
 in England, sailed with an English crew from Bristol in
 1497, and pushed along the coast of America to the south
 as far as Florida, and northward as high as Hudson's Bay.
 But no Englishman followed on the track of this bold
 adventurer; and while Spain built up her empire in the
 New World, the English seamen reaped a humbler harvest
 in the fisheries of Newfoundland.

*The
Sea-dogs.* There was little therefore in the circumstances which
 attended the first discovery of the western continent that
 promised well for freedom. Its one result as yet was to
 give an enormous impulse to the most bigoted and
 tyrannical among the powers of Europe, and to pour the
 gold of Mexico and Peru into the treasury of Spain. But
 as the reign of Elizabeth went on the thoughts of Engli-
 shmen turned again to the New World. A happy instinct
 drew them from the first not to the southern shores that
 Spain was conquering, but to the ruder and more barren
 districts of the north. In 1576 the dream of finding a
 passage to Asia by a voyage round the northern coast of the
 American continent drew a west-country seaman, Martin
 Frobisher, to the coast of Labrador; and, foiled as he
 was in his quest, the news he brought back of the
 existence of gold mines there set adventurers cruising
 among the icebergs of Baffin's Bay. Elizabeth herself
 joined in the venture; but the settlement proved a failure,
 the ore which the ships brought back turned out to be

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worthless, and England was saved from that greed of gold which was to be fatal to the energies of Spain. But failure as it was, Frobisher's venture had shown the readiness of Englishmen to defy the claims of Spain to the exclusive possession of America or the American seas. They were already defying these claims in a yet more galling way. The seamen of the southern and south-western coasts had long been carrying on a half-piratical war on their own account. Four years after Elizabeth's accession the Channel swarmed with "sea-dogs," as they were called, who sailed under letters of marque from Condé and the Huguenot leaders, and took heed neither of the complaints of the French Court nor of their own Queen's efforts at repression. Her efforts broke against the connivance of every man along the coast, of the very port officers of the Crown, who made profit out of the spoil which the plunderers brought home, and of the gentry of the west, whose love of venture made them go hand in hand with the sea-dogs. They broke above all against the national craving for open fight with Spain, and the Protestant craving for open fight with Catholicism. If the Queen held back from any formal part in the great war of religions across the Channel, her subjects were keen to take their part in it. Young Englishmen crossed the sea to serve under Condé or Henry of Navarre. The war in the Netherlands drew hundreds of Protestants to the field. Their passionate longing for a religious war found a wider sphere on the sea. When the suspension of the French contest forced the sea-dogs to haul down the Huguenot flag, they joined in the cruizes of the Dutch "sea-beggars." From plundering the vessels of Havre and Rochelle they turned to plunder the galleons of Spain.

Drake.

Their outrages tried Philip's patience; but his slow resentment only quickened into angry alarm when the sea-dogs sailed westward to seek a richer spoil. The Papal decree which gave the New World to Spain, the threats of the Spanish King against any Protestant

who should visit its seas, fell idly on the ears of English seamen. Philip's care to save his new dominions from the touch of heresy was only equalled by his resolve to suffer no trade between them and other lands than Spain. But the sea-dogs were as ready to traffic as to fight. It was in vain that their vessels were seized, and the sailors flung into the dungeons of the Inquisition, "laden with irons, without sight of sun or moon." The profits of the trade were large enough to counteract its perils; and the bigotry of Philip was met by a bigotry as merciless as his own. The Puritanism of the sea-dogs went hand in hand with their love of adventure. To break through the Catholic monopoly of the New World, to kill Spaniards, to sell negroes, to sack gold-ships, were in these men's mind a seemly work for "the elect of God." The name of Francis Drake became the terror of the Spanish Indies. In Drake a Protestant fanaticism went hand in hand with a splendid daring. He conceived the design of penetrating into the Pacific, whose waters had till then never seen an English flag; and backed by a little company of adventurers, he set sail in 1577 for the southern seas in a vessel hardly as big as a Channel schooner, with a few yet smaller companions who fell away before the storms and perils of the voyage. But Drake with his one ship and eighty men held boldly on; and passing the Straits of Magellan, untraversed as yet by any Englishman, swept the unguarded coast of Chili and Peru, loaded his bark with the gold dust and silver ingots of Potosi, as well as with the pearls, emeralds, and diamonds which formed the cargo of the great galleon that sailed once a year from Lima to Cadiz. With spoils of above half-a-million in value the daring adventurer steered undauntedly for the Moluccas, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and in 1580, after completing the circuit of the globe, dropped anchor again in Plymouth harbour.

The romantic daring of Drake's voyage as well as the vastness of his spoil roused a general enthusiasm through-

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Conquest
of
Portugal.

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out England. But the welcome which he received from Elizabeth on his return was accepted by Philip as an outrage which could only be expiated by war. Sluggish as it was, the blood of the Spanish King was fired at last by the defiance with which the Queen listened to all demands for redress. She met a request for Drake's surrender by knighting the freebooter and by wearing in her crown the jewels he offered her as a present. When the Spanish ambassador threatened that "matters would come to the cannon," she replied "quietly, in her most natural voice, as if she were telling a common story," wrote Mendoza, "that if I used threats of that kind she would fling me into a dungeon." Outraged indeed as Philip was, she believed that with the Netherlands still in revolt and France longing for her alliance to enable it to seize them, the King could not afford to quarrel with her. But the victories and diplomacy of Parma were already reassuring Philip in the Netherlands; while the alliance of Elizabeth with the revolted Provinces convinced him at last that their reduction could best be brought about by an invasion of England and the establishment of Mary Stuart on its throne. With this conviction he lent himself to the plans of Rome, and waited only for the rising in Ireland and the revolt of the English Catholics which Pope Gregory promised him to despatch forces from both Flanders and Spain. But the Irish rising was over before Philip could act; and before the Jesuits could rouse England to rebellion the Spanish King himself was drawn to a new scheme of ambition by the death of King Sebastian of Portugal in 1580. Philip claimed the Portuguese crown; and in less than two months Alva laid the kingdom at his feet. The conquest of Portugal was fatal to the Papal projects against England, for while the armies of Spain marched on Lisbon Elizabeth was able to throw the leaders of the expected revolt into prison and to send Campian to the scaffold. On the other hand it raised Philip into a far more formidable foe. The conquest

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almost doubled his power. His gain was far more than that of Portugal itself. While Spain had been winning the New World her sister-kingdom had been winning a wide though scattered dominion on the African coast, the coast of India, and the islands of the Pacific. Less in extent, the Portuguese settlements were at the moment of even greater value to the mother country than the colonies of Spain. The gold of Guinea, the silks of Goa, the spices of the Philippines made Lisbon one of the marts of Europe. The sword of Alva had given Philip a hold on the richest trade of the world. It had given him the one navy that as yet rivalled his own. His flag claimed mastery in the Indian and the Pacific seas, as it claimed mastery in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

The conquest of Portugal therefore wholly changed Philip's position. It not only doubled his power and resources, but it did this at a time when fortune seemed everywhere wavering to his side. The provinces of the Netherlands, which still maintained a struggle for their liberties, drew courage from despair; and met Philip's fresh hopes of their subjection by a solemn repudiation of his sovereignty in the summer of 1581. But they did not dream that they could stand alone, and they sought the aid of France by choosing as their new sovereign the Duke of Alençon, who on his brother Henry's accession to the throne had become Duke of Anjou. The choice was only part of a political scheme which was to bind the whole of Western Europe together against Spain. The conquest of Portugal had at once drawn France and England into close relations, and Catharine of Medicis strove to league the two countries by a marriage of Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou. Such a match would have been a purely political one, for Elizabeth was now forty-eight, and Francis of Anjou had no qualities either of mind or body to recommend him to the Queen. But the English ministers pressed for it, Elizabeth amidst all her coquetries seemed at last ready to marry, and the

*The
marriage
with
Anjou.*

CHAP. VI. States seized the moment to lend themselves to the alliance of the two powers by choosing the Duke as their lord. Anjou accepted their offer, and crossing to the Netherlands, drove Parma from Cambray; then sailing again to England, he spent the winter in a fresh wooing.

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—
Its failure.

But the Duke's wooing still proved fruitless. The schemes of diplomacy found themselves shattered against the religious enthusiasm of the time. While Orange and Catharine and Elizabeth saw only the political weight of the marriage as a check upon Philip, the sterner Protestants in England saw in it a victory for Catholicism at home. Of the difference between the bigoted Catholicism of Spain and the more tolerant Catholicism of the court of France such men recked nothing. The memory of St. Bartholomew's day hung around Catharine of Medicis; and the success of the Jesuits at this moment roused the dread of a general conspiracy against Protestantism. A Puritan lawyer named Stubbs only expressed the alarm of his fellows in his "Discovery of a Gaping Gulf" in which England was to plunge through the match with Anjou. When the hand of the pamphleteer was cut off as a penalty for his daring, Stubbs waved his hat with the hand that was left, and cried "God save Queen Elizabeth." But the Queen knew how stern a fanaticism went with this unflinching loyalty, and her dread of a religious conflict within her realm must have quickened the fears which the worthless temper of her wooer cannot but have inspired. She gave however no formal refusal of her hand. So long as coquetry sufficed to hold France and England together, she was ready to play the coquette; and it was as the future husband of the Queen that Anjou again appeared in 1582 in the Netherlands and received the formal submission of the revolted States, save Holland and Zeeland. But the subtle schemes which centred in him broke down before the selfish perfidy of the Duke. Resolved to be ruler in more than name, he planned the seizure of the greater cities of the Nether-

lands, and at the opening of 1583 made a fruitless effort to take Antwerp by surprize. It was in vain that Orange strove by patient negotiation to break the blow. The Duke fled homewards, the match and sovereignty were at an end, the alliance of the three powers vanished like a dream. The last Catholic provinces passed over to Parma's side; the weakened Netherlands found themselves parted from France; and at the close of 1583 Elizabeth saw herself left face to face with Philip of Spain.

Nor was this all. At home as well as abroad troubles were thickening around the Queen. The fanaticism of the Catholic world without was stirring a Protestant fanaticism within the realm. As Rome became more and more the centre of hostility to England, patriotism itself stirred men to a hatred of Rome; and their hatred of Rome passed easily into a love for the fiercer and sterner Calvinism which looked on all compromise with Rome, or all acceptance of religious traditions or usages which had been associated with Rome, as treason against God. Puritanism, as this religious temper was called, was becoming the creed of every earnest Protestant throughout the realm; and the demand for a further advance towards the Calvinistic system and a more open breach with Catholicism which was embodied in the suppression of the "superstitious usages" became stronger than ever. But Elizabeth was firm as of old to make no advance. Greatly as the Protestants had grown, she knew they were still a minority in the realm. If the hotter Catholics were fast decreasing, they remained a large and important body. But the mass of the nation was neither Catholic nor Protestant. It had lost faith in the Papacy. It was slowly drifting to a new faith in the Bible. But it still clung obstinately to the past; it still recoiled from violent change; its temper was religious rather than theological, and it shrank from the fanaticism of Geneva as it shrank from the fanaticism of Rome. It was a proof of Elizabeth's genius that alone among her counsellors she understood this drift of

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The Puritans and the Crown.

CHAP. VI. opinion, and withstood measures which would have startled the mass of Englishmen into a new resistance.
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 The High Commission.
 But her policy was wider than her acts. The growing Puritanism of the clergy stirred her wrath above measure, and she met the growth of "nonconforming" ministers by conferring new powers in 1583 on the Ecclesiastical Commission. From being a temporary board which represented the Royal Supremacy in matters ecclesiastical, the Commission was now turned into a permanent body wielding the almost unlimited powers of the Crown. All opinions or acts contrary to the Statutes of Supremacy and 'Uniformity fell within its cognizance. A right of deprivation placed the clergy at its mercy. It had power to alter or amend the statutes of colleges or schools. Not only heresy and schism and nonconformity, but incest or aggravated adultery were held to fall within its scope; its means of enquiry were left without limit, and it might fine or imprison at its will. By the mere establishment of such a court half the work of the Reformation was undone. The large number of civilians on the board indeed seemed to furnish some security against the excess of ecclesiastical tyranny. Of its forty-four commissioners however few actually took any part in its proceedings; and the powers of the Commission were practically left in the hands of the successive Primates. No Archbishop of Canterbury since the days of Augustine had wielded an authority so vast, so utterly despotic, as that of Whitgift and Bancroft and Abbot and Laud. The most terrible feature of their spiritual tyranny was its wholly personal character. The old symbols of doctrine were gone, and the lawyers had not yet stepped in to protect the clergy by defining the exact limits of the new. The result was that at the commission-board at Lambeth the Primates created their own tests of doctrine with an utter indifference to those created by law. In one instance Parker deprived a vicar of his benefice for a denial of the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Nor did

the successive Archbishops care greatly if the test was a varying or a conflicting one. Whitgift strove to force on the Church the Calvinistic supralapsarianism of his Lambeth Articles. Bancroft, who followed him, was as earnest in enforcing his anti-Calvinistic dogma of the divine right of the episcopate. Abbot had no mercy for Erastians. Laud had none for anti-Erastians. It is no wonder that the Ecclesiastical Commission, which these men represented, soon stank in the nostrils of the English clergy. Its establishment however marked the adoption of a more resolute policy on the part of the Crown, and its efforts were backed by stern measures of repression. All preaching or reading in private houses was forbidden; and in spite of the refusal of Parliament to enforce the requirement of them by law, subscription to the Three Articles was exacted from every member of the clergy. For the moment these measures were crowned with success. The movement which Cartwright still headed was checked; Cartwright himself was driven from his Professorship; and an outer uniformity of worship was more and more brought about by the steady pressure of the Commission. The old liberty which had been allowed in London and the other Protestant parts of the kingdom was no longer permitted to exist. The leading Puritan clergy, whose nonconformity had hitherto been winked at, were called upon to submit to the surplice, and to make the sign of the cross in baptism. The remonstrances of the country gentry availed as little as the protest of Lord Burleigh himself to protect two hundred of the best ministers from being driven from their parsonages on a refusal to subscribe to the Three Articles.

But the political danger of the course on which the Crown had entered was seen in the rise of a spirit of vigorous opposition, such as had not made its appearance since the accession of the Tudors. The growing power of public opinion received a striking recognition in the struggle which bears the name of the "Martin Mar-

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 —

Martin
 Mar-
 prelate.

CHAP. VI. prelate controversy." The Puritans had from the first
 England and Spain. appealed by their pamphlets from the Crown to the people,
 1582-1593. and Archbishop Whitgift bore witness to their influence
 on opinion by his efforts to gag the Press. The regulations
 made by the Star-Chamber in 1585 for this purpose are
 memorable as the first step in the long struggle of govern-
 ment after government to check the liberty of printing.
 The irregular censorship which had long existed was now
 finally organized. Printing was restricted to London and
 the two Universities, the number of printers was reduced,
 and all applicants for license to print were placed under
 the supervision of the Company of Stationers. Every
 publication too, great or small, had to receive the appro-
 bation of the Primate or the Bishop of London. The first
 result of this system of repression was the appearance, in
 the very year of the Armada, of a series of anonymous
 pamphlets bearing the significant name of "Martin Mar-
 prelate," and issued from a secret press which found refuge
 from the Royal pursuivants in the country-houses of the
 gentry. The press was at last seized; and the suspected
 authors of these scurrilous libels, Penry, a young Welsh-
 man, and a minister named Udall, died, the one in prison,
 the other on the scaffold. But the virulence and bold-
 ness of their language produced a powerful effect, for it
 was impossible under the system of Elizabeth to "mar"
 the bishops without attacking the Crown; and a new
 age of political liberty was felt to be at hand when
 Martin Marprelate forced the political and ecclesiastical
 measures of the Government into the arena of public
 discussion.

The
 gathering
 of the
 Armada. The strife between Puritanism and the Crown was to
 grow into a fatal conflict, but at the moment the Queen's
 policy was in the main a wise one. It was no time for
 scaring and disuniting the mass of the people when the
 united energies of England might soon hardly suffice to
 withstand the onset of Spain. On the other hand, strike
 as she might at the Puritan party, it was bound to

support Elizabeth in the coming struggle with Philip. CHAP. VI.
 For the sense of personal wrong and the outcry of the England
 and Spain. Catholic world against his selfish reluctance to avenge the
 1582-1593. blood of its martyrs had at last told on the Spanish King,
 and in 1584 the first vessels of an armada which was des-
 tined for the conquest of England began to gather in the
 Tagus. Resentment and fanaticism indeed were backed
 by a cool policy. The gain of the Portuguese dominions
 made it only the more needful for Philip to assert his
 mastery of the seas. He had now to shut Englishman
 and heretic not only out of the New World of the West
 but out of the lucrative traffic with the East. And every day
 showed a firmer resolve in Englishmen to claim the New
 World for their own. The plunder of Drake's memorable
 voyage had lured fresh freebooters to the "Spanish Main."
 The failure of Frobisher's quest for gold only drew the
 nobler spirits engaged in it to plans of colonization. North
 America, vexed by long winters and thinly peopled by
 warlike tribes of Indians, gave a rough welcome to the
 earlier colonists; and after a fruitless attempt to form a
 settlement on its shores Sir Humphry Gilbert, one of the
 noblest spirits of his time, turned homewards again to
 find his fate in the stormy seas. "We are as near to
 heaven by sea as by land," were the famous words he was
 heard to utter ere the light of his little bark was lost for
 ever in the darkness of the night. But an expedition
 sent by his brother-in-law, Sir Walter Raleigh, explored
 Pamlico Sound; and the country they discovered, a
 country where in their poetic fancy "men lived after the
 manner of the Golden Age," received from Elizabeth, the
 Virgin Queen, the name of Virginia.

It was in England only that Philip could maintain his
 exclusive right to the New World of the West; it was
 through England only that he could strike a last and
 fatal blow at the revolt of the Netherlands. And foiled
 as his plans had been as yet by the overthrow of the
 Papal schemes, even their ruin had left ground for hope in

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England itself. The tortures and hangings of the Catholic priests, the fining and imprisonment of the Catholic gentry, had roused a resentment which it was easy to mistake for disloyalty. The Jesuits with Parsons at their head pictured the English Catholics as only waiting to rise in rebellion at the call of Spain, and reported long lists of nobles and squires who would muster their tenants to join Parma's legions on their landing. A Spanish victory would be backed by insurrection in Ireland and attack from Scotland. For in Scotland the last act of the Papal conspiracy against Elizabeth was still being played. Though as yet under age, the young King, James the Sixth, had taken on himself the government of the realm, and had submitted to the guidance of a cousin, Esme Stuart, who had been brought up in France and returned to Scotland a Catholic and a fellow-plotter with the Guises. He succeeded in bringing Morton to the block; and the death of the great Protestant leader left him free to enlist Scotland in the league which Rome was forming for the ruin of Elizabeth. The revolt in Ireland had failed. The work of the Jesuits in England had just ended in the death of Campian and the arrest of his followers. But with the help of the Guises Scotland might yet be brought to rise in arms for the liberation of Mary Stuart, and James might reign as co-regent with his mother, if he were converted to the Catholic Church. The young King, anxious to free his crown from the dictation of the nobles, lent himself to his cousin's schemes. For the moment they were foiled. James was seized by the Protestant lords, and the Duke of Lennox, as Esme Stuart was now called, driven from the realm. But James was soon free again, and again in correspondence with the Guises and with Philip. The young King was lured by promises of the hand of an arch-duchess and the hope of the crowns of both England and Scotland. The real aim of the intriguers who guided him was to set him aside as soon as the victory was won and to restore his mother to

the throne. But whether Mary were restored or no it seemed certain that in any attack on Elizabeth Spain would find helpers from among the Scots.

Nor was the opportunity favourable in Scotland alone. In the Netherlands and in France all seemed to go well for Philip's schemes. From the moment of his arrival in the Low Countries the Prince of Parma had been steadily winning back what Alva had lost. The Union of Ghent had been broken. The ten Catholic provinces were being slowly brought anew under Spanish rule. Town after town was regained. From Brabant Parma had penetrated into Flanders; Ypres, Bruges, and Ghent had fallen into his hands. Philip dealt a more fatal blow at his rebellious subjects in the murder of the man who was the centre of their resistance. For years past William of Orange had been a mark for assassin after assassin in Philip's pay, and in 1584 the deadly persistence of the Spanish King was rewarded by his fall. Reft indeed as they were of their leader, the Netherlands still held their ground. The union of Utrecht stood intact; and Philip's work of reconquest might be checked at any moment by the intervention of England or of France. But at this moment all chance of French intervention passed away. Henry the Third was childless, and the death of his one remaining brother, Francis of Anjou, in 1584 left the young chief of the house of Bourbon, King Henry of Navarre, heir to the crown of France. Henry was the leader of the Huguenot party, and in January, 1585, the French Catholics bound themselves in a holy league to prevent such a triumph of heresy in the realm as the reign of a Protestant would bring about by securing the succession of Henry's uncle, the cardinal of Bourbon. The Leaguers looked to Philip for support; they owned his cause for their own; and pledged themselves not only to root out Protestantism in France, but to help the Spanish King in rooting it out throughout the Netherlands. The League at once overshadowed the Crown; and

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CHAP. VI. Henry the Third could only meet the blow by affecting to put himself at its head, and by revoking the edicts of toleration in favour of the Huguenots. But the Catholics disbelieved in his sincerity; they looked only to Philip; and as long as Philip could supply the Leaguers with men and money, he felt secure on the side of France.

Elizabeth attacks Philip.

The vanishing of all hope of French aid was the more momentous to the Netherlands that at this moment Parma won his crowning triumph in the capture of Antwerp. Besieged in the winter of 1584, the city surrendered after a brave resistance in the August of 1585. But heavy as was the blow, it brought gain as well as loss to the Netherlanders. It forced Elizabeth into action. She refused indeed the title of Protector of the Netherlands which the States offered her, and compelled them to place Brill and Flushing in her hands as pledges for the repayment of her expenses. But she sent aid. Lord Leicester was hurried to the Flemish coast with eight thousand men. In a yet bolder spirit of defiance Francis Drake was suffered to set sail with a fleet of twenty-five vessels for the Spanish Main. The two expeditions had very different fortunes. Drake's voyage was a series of triumphs. The wrongs inflicted on English seamen by the Inquisition were requited by the burning of the cities of St. Domingo and Carthagen. The coasts of Cuba and Florida were plundered, and though the gold fleet escaped him, Drake returned in the summer of 1586 with a heavy booty. Leicester on the other hand was paralyzed by his own intriguing temper, by strife with the Queen, and by his military incapacity. Only one disastrous skirmish at Zutphen broke the inaction of his forces, while Elizabeth strove vainly to use the presence of his army to force Parma and the States alike to a peace which would restore Philip's sovereignty over the Netherlands, but leave them free enough to serve as a check on Philip's designs against herself.

The Catholic Plots.

Foiled as she was in securing a check on Philip in the Low Countries, the Queen was more successful in robbing

him of the aid of the Scots. The action of King James had been guided by his greed of the English Crown, and a secret promise of the succession sufficed to lure him from the cause of Spain. In July 1586 he formed an alliance, defensive and offensive, with Elizabeth, and pledged himself not only to give no aid to revolt in Ireland, but to suppress any Catholic rising in the northern counties. The pledge was the more important that the Catholic resentment seemed passing into fanaticism. Maddened by confiscation and persecution, by the hopelessness of rebellion within or of deliverance from without, the fiercer Catholics listened to schemes of assassination to which the murder of William of Orange lent a terrible significance. The detection of Somerville, a fanatic who had received the host before setting out for London "to shoot the Queen with his dagger," was followed by measures of natural severity, by the flight and arrest of Catholic gentry and peers, by a vigorous purification of the Inns of Court where a few Catholics lingered, and by the despatch of fresh batches of priests to the block. The trial and death of Parry, a member of the House of Commons who had served in the royal household, on a similar charge fed the general panic. The leading Protestants formed an association whose members pledged themselves to pursue to the death all who sought the Queen's life, and all on whose behalf it was sought. The association soon became national, and the Parliament met together in a transport of horror and loyalty to give it legal sanction. All Jesuits and seminary priests were banished from the realm on pain of death, and a bill for the security of the Queen disqualified any claimant of the succession who instigated subjects to rebellion or hurt to the Queen's person from ever succeeding to the Crown.

The threat was aimed at Mary Stuart. Weary of her long restraint, of her failure to rouse Philip or Scotland to her aid, of the baffled revolt of the English Catholics and the baffled intrigues of the Jesuits, Mary had bent for

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Death of Mary Stuart.

CHAP. VI. a moment to submission. "Let me go," she wrote to Elizabeth; "let me retire from this island to some solitude where I may prepare my soul to die. Grant this and I will sign away every right which either I or mine can claim." But the cry was useless, and in 1586 her despair found a new and more terrible hope in the plots against Elizabeth's life. She knew and approved the vow of Anthony Babington and a band of young Catholics, for the most part connected with the royal household, to kill the Queen and seat Mary on the throne; but plot and approval alike passed through Walsingham's hands, and the seizure of Mary's correspondence revealed her connivance in the scheme. Babington with his fellow conspirators were at once sent to the block, and the provisions of the act passed in the last Parliament were put in force against Mary. In spite of her protests a Commission of Peers sate as her judges at Fotheringay Castle; and their verdict of "guilty" annihilated under the provisions of the statute her claim to the Crown. The streets of London blazed with bonfires, and peals rang out from steeple to steeple at the news of Mary's condemnation; but in spite of the prayer of Parliament for her execution and the pressure of the Council Elizabeth shrank from her death. The force of public opinion however was now carrying all before it, and after three months of hesitation the unanimous demand of her people wrested a sullen consent from the Queen. She flung the warrant signed upon the floor, and the Council took on themselves the responsibility of executing it. On the 8th of February, 1587, Mary died on a scaffold which was erected in the castle-hall at Fotheringay as dauntlessly as she had lived. "Do not weep," she said to her ladies, "I have given my word for you." "Tell my friends," she charged Melville, "that I die a good Catholic."

Philip and England. The blow was hardly struck before Elizabeth turned with fury on the ministers who had forced her hand.

Cecil, who had now become Lord Burghley, was for a while disgraced, and Davison, who carried the warrant to the Council, was sent to the Tower to atone for an act which shattered the policy of the Queen. The death of Mary Stuart in fact seemed to have removed the last obstacle out of Philip's way. It had put an end to the divisions of the English Catholics. To the Spanish King, as to the nearest heir in blood who was of the Catholic Faith, Mary bequeathed her rights to the Crown, and the hopes of her more passionate adherents were from that moment bound up in the success of Spain. The blow too kindled afresh the fervour of the Papacy, and Sixtus the Fifth offered to aid Philip with money in his invasion of the heretic realm. But Philip no longer needed pressure to induce him to act. Drake's triumph had taught him that the conquest of England was needful for the security of his dominion in the New World, and for the mastery of the seas. The presence of an English army in Flanders convinced him that the road to the conquest of the States lay through England itself. Nor did the attempt seem a very perilous one. Allen and his Jesuit emissaries assured Philip that the bulk of the nation was ready to rise as soon as a strong Spanish force was landed on English shores. They numbered off the great lords who would head the revolt, the Earls of Arundel and Northumberland, who were both Catholics, the Earls of Worcester, Cumberland, Oxford, and Southampton, Viscount Montacute, the Lords Dacres, Morley, Vaux, Wharton, Windsor, Lumley, and Stourton. "All these," wrote Allen, "will follow our party when they see themselves supported by a sufficient foreign force." Against these were only "the new nobles, who are hated in the country," and the towns. "But the strength of England is not in its towns." All the more warlike counties were Catholic in their sympathies; and the persecution of the recusants had destroyed the last traces of their loyalty to the Queen. Three hundred priests had been sent across the sea to organize the insur-

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rection, and they were circulating a book which Allen had lately published "to prove that it is not only lawful but our bounden duty to take up arms at the Pope's bidding and to fight for the Catholic faith against the Queen and other heretics." A landing in the Pope's name would be best, but a landing in Philip's name would be almost as secure of success. Trained as they were now by Allen and his three hundred priests, English Catholics "would let in Catholic auxiliaries of any nation, for they have learned to hate their domestic heretic more than any foreign power."

Philip
and
France.

What truth there was in the Jesuit view of England time was to prove. But there can be no doubt that Philip believed it, and that the promise of a Catholic rising was his chief inducement to attempt an invasion. The operations of Parma therefore were suspended with a view to the greater enterprize, and vessels and supplies for the fleet which had for three years been gathering in the Tagus were collected from every port of the Spanish coast. Only France held Philip back. He dared not attack England till all dread of a counter-attack from France was removed; and though the rise of the League had seemed to secure this, its success had now become more doubtful. The King, who had striven to embarrass it by placing himself at its head, gathered round him the politicians and the moderate Catholics who saw in the triumph of the new Duke of Guise the ruin of the monarchy; while Henry of Navarre took the field at the head of the Huguenots, and won in 1587 the victory of Coutras. Guise restored the balance by driving the German allies of Henry from the realm; but the Huguenots were still unconquered, and the King, standing apart, fed a struggle which lightened for him the pressure of the League. Philip was forced to watch the wavering fortunes of the struggle, but while he watched, another blow fell on him from the sea. The news of the coming Armada called Drake again to action. In April, 1587, he set sail with

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thirty small barks, burned the storeships and galleys in the harbour of Cadiz, stormed the ports of the Faro, and was only foiled in his aim of attacking the Armada itself by orders from home. A descent upon Corunna however completed what Drake called his "singeing of the Spanish king's beard." Elizabeth used the daring blow to back some negotiations for peace which she was still conducting in the Netherlands. But on Philip's side at least these negotiations were simply delusive. The Spanish pride had been touched to the quick. Amidst the exchange of protocols Parma gathered seventeen thousand men for the coming invasion, collected a fleet of flat-bottomed transports at Dunkirk, and waited impatiently for the Armada to protect his crossing. The attack of Drake however, the death of its first admiral, and the winter storms delayed the fleet from sailing. What held it back even more effectually was the balance of parties in France. But in the spring of 1588 Philip's patience was rewarded. The League had been baffled till now not so much by the resistance of the Huguenots as by the attitude of the King. So long as Henry the Third held aloof from both parties and gave a rallying point to the party of moderation the victory of the Leaguers was impossible. The difficulty was solved by the daring of Henry of Guise. The fanatical populace of Paris rose at his call; the royal troops were beaten off from the barricades; and on the 12th of May the King found himself a prisoner in the hands of the Duke. Guise was made lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and Philip was assured on the side of France.

The revolution was hardly over when at the end of May the Armada started from Lisbon. But it had scarcely put to sea when a gale in the Bay of Biscay drove its scattered vessels into Ferrol, and it was only on the nineteenth of July 1588 that the sails of the Armada were seen from the Lizard, and the English beacons flared out their alarm along the coast. The news found England ready. An army was mustering under Leicester at Tilbury, the militia of the

The
Armada
sails.

CHAP. VI. midland counties were gathering to London, while those of
 England the south and east were held in readiness to meet a descent
 and Spain. on either shore. The force which Parma hoped to lead
 1582- consisted of forty thousand men, for the Armada brought
 1593. nearly twenty-two thousand soldiers to be added to the
 seventeen thousand who were waiting to cross from the
 Netherlands. Formidable as this force was, it was far
 too weak by itself to do the work which Philip meant
 it to do. Had Parma landed on the earliest day he
 purposed, he would have found his way to London barred
 by a force stronger than his own, a force too of men in
 whose ranks were many who had already crossed pikes on
 equal terms with his best infantry in Flanders. "When I
 shall have landed," he warned his master, "I must fight
 battle after battle, I shall lose men by wounds and
 disease, I must leave detachments behind me to keep
 open my communications; and in a short time the body
 of my army will become so weak that not only I may
 be unable to advance in the face of the enemy, and time
 may be given to the heretics and your Majesty's other
 enemies to interfere, but there may fall out some notable
 inconveniences, with the loss of everything, and I be
 unable to remedy it." What Philip really counted on
 was the aid which his army would find within England
 itself. Parma's chance of victory, if he succeeded in land-
 ing, lay in a Catholic rising. But at this crisis patriotism
 proved stronger than religious fanaticism in the hearts of
 the English Catholics. The news of invasion ran like fire
 along the English coasts. The whole nation answered the
 Queen's appeal. Instinct told England that its work was
 to be done at sea, and the royal fleet was soon lost among
 the vessels of the volunteers. London, when Elizabeth
 asked for fifteen ships and five thousand men, offered
 thirty ships and ten thousand seamen, while ten thousand
 of its train-bands drilled in the Artillery ground. Every
 seaport showed the same temper. Coasters put out from
 every little harbour. Squires and merchants pushed off in

their own little barks for a brush with the Spaniards. In CHAP. VI.
 the presence of the stranger all religious strife was for- England
 gotten. The work of the Jesuits was undone in an hour. and Spain.
 Of the nobles and squires whose tenants were to muster 1582-
 under the flag of the invader not one proved a traitor. 1593.
 The greatest lords on Allen's list of Philip's helpers, Cum-
 berland, Oxford, and Northumberland, brought their vessels
 up alongside of Drake and Lord Howard as soon as
 Philip's fleet appeared in the Channel. The Catholic
 gentry who had been painted as longing for the coming of
 the stranger, led their tenantry, when the stranger came,
 to the muster at Tilbury.

The loyalty of the Catholics decided the fate of Philip's
 scheme. Even if Parma's army succeeded in landing, its
 task was now an impossible one. Forty thousand Spaniards
 were no match for four millions of Englishmen, banded
 together by a common resolve to hold England against the
 foreigner. But to secure a landing at all, the Spaniards had
 to be masters of the Channel. Parma might gather his
 army on the Flemish coast, but every estuary and inlet was
 blocked by the Dutch cruisers. The Netherlands knew
 well that the conquest of England was planned only as a
 prelude to their own reduction; and the enthusiasm with
 which England rushed to the conflict was hardly greater
 than that which stirred the Hollanders. A fleet of
 ninety vessels, with the best Dutch seamen at their head,
 held the Scheldt and the shallows of Dunkirk, and it was
 only by driving this fleet from the water that Parma's
 army could be set free to join in the great enterprize. The
 great need of the Armada therefore was to reach the
 coast of Flanders. It was ordered to make for Calais, and
 wait there for the junction of Parma. But even if Parma
 joined it, the passage of his force was impossible without
 a command of the Channel; and in the Channel lay an
 English fleet resolved to struggle hard for the mastery.
 As the Armada sailed on in a broad crescent past Ply-
 mouth, the vessels which had gathered under Lord Howard

*The two
 fleets.*

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of Effingham slipped out of the bay and hung with the wind upon their rear. In numbers the two forces were strangely unequal, for the English fleet counted only eighty vessels against the hundred and thirty-two which composed the Armada. In size of ships the disproportion was even greater. Fifty of the English vessels, including the squadron of the Lord Admiral and the craft of the volunteers, were little bigger than yachts of the present day. Even of the thirty Queen's ships which formed its main body, there were but four which equalled in tonnage the smallest of the Spanish galleons. Sixty-five of these galleons formed the most formidable half of the Spanish fleet; and four galleasses, or gigantic galleys, armed with fifty guns apiece, fifty-six armed merchantmen, and twenty pinnaces made up the rest. The Armada was provided with 2,500 cannons, and a vast store of provisions; it had on board 8,000 seamen and more than 20,000 soldiers; and if a court-favourite, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, had been placed at its head, he was supported by the ablest staff of naval officers which Spain possessed.

*The fight
with the
Armada.*

Small however as the English ships were, they were in perfect trim; they sailed two feet for the Spaniards' one, they were manned with 9,000 hardy seamen, and their Admiral was backed by a crowd of captains who had won fame in the Spanish seas. With him was Hawkins, who had been the first to break into the charmed circle of the Indies; Frobisher, the hero of the North-West passage; and above all Drake, who held command of the privateers. They had won too the advantage of the wind; and, closing in or drawing off as they would, the lightly-handled English vessels, which fired four shots to the Spaniard's one, hung boldly on the rear of the great fleet as it moved along the Channel. "The feathers of the Spaniard," in the phrase of the English seamen, were "plucked one by one." Galleon after galleon was sunk, boarded, driven on shore; and yet Medina Sidonia failed in bringing his pursuers to a close engagement. Now halting, now

moving slowly on, the running fight between the two fleets lasted throughout the week, till on Sunday, the twenty-eighth of July, the Armada dropped anchor in Calais roads. The time had come for sharper work if the junction of the Armada with Parma was to be prevented; for, demoralized as the Spaniards had been by the merciless chase, their loss in ships had not been great, and their appearance off Dunkirk might drive off the ships of the Hollanders who hindered the sailing of the Duke. On the other hand, though the numbers of English ships had grown, their supplies of food and ammunition were fast running out. Howard therefore resolved to force an engagement; and, lighting eight fire-ships at midnight, sent them down with the tide upon the Spanish line. The galleons at once cut their cables, and stood out in panic to sea, drifting with the wind in a long line off Gravelines. Drake resolved at all costs to prevent their return. At dawn on the twenty-ninth the English ships closed fairly in, and almost their last cartridge was spent ere the sun went down.

Hard as the fight had been, it seemed far from a decisive one. Three great galleons indeed had sunk in the engagement, three had drifted helplessly on to the Flemish coast, but the bulk of the Spanish vessels remained, and even to Drake the fleet seemed "wonderful great and strong." Within the Armada itself however all hope was gone. Huddled together by the wind and the deadly English fire, their sails torn, their masts shot away, the crowded galleons had become mere slaughter-houses. Four thousand men had fallen, and bravely as the seamen fought, they were cowed by the terrible butchery. Medina himself was in despair. "We are lost, Señor Oquenda," he cried to his bravest captain; "what are we to do?" "Let others talk of being lost," replied Oquenda, "your Excellency has only to order up fresh cartridge." But Oquenda stood alone, and a council of war resolved on retreat to Spain by the one course open, that of a

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circuit round the Orkneys. "Never anything pleased me better," wrote Drake, "than seeing the enemy fly with a southerly wind to the northwards. Have a good eye to the Prince of Parma, for, with the grace of God, I doubt not ere it be long so to handle the matter with the Duke of Sidonia, as he shall wish himself at St. Mary Port among his orange trees." But the work of destruction was reserved for a mightier foe than Drake. The English vessels were soon forced to give up the chase by the running out of their supplies. But the Spanish ships had no sooner reached the Orkneys than the storms of the northern seas broke on them with a fury before which all concert and union disappeared. In October fifty reached Corunna, bearing ten thousand men stricken with pestilence and death. Of the rest some were sunk, some dashed to pieces against the Irish cliffs. The wreckers of the Orkneys and the Faroes, the clansmen of the Scottish Isles, the kernes of Donegal and Galway, all had their part in the work of murder and robbery. Eight thousand Spaniards perished between the Giant's Causeway and the Blaskets. On a strand near Sligo an English captain numbered eleven hundred corpses which had been cast up by the sea. The flower of the Spanish nobility, who had been sent on the new crusade under Alonzo da Leyva, after twice suffering shipwreck, put a third time to sea to founder on a reef near Dunluce.

*Its effect
on
England.*

"I sent my ships against men," said Philip when the news reached him, "not against the seas." It was in nobler tone that England owned her debt to the storm that drove the Armada to its doom. On the medal that commemorated its triumph were graven the words, "The Lord sent his wind, and scattered them." The pride of the conquerors was hushed before their sense of a mighty deliverance. It was not till England saw the broken host "fly with a southerly wind to the north" that she knew what a weight of fear she had borne for thirty years. The victory over the Armada, the deliverance from Spain,

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the rolling away of the Catholic terror which had hung like a cloud over the hopes of the new people, was like a passing from death unto life. Within as without, the dark sky suddenly cleared. The national unity proved stronger than the religious strife. When the Catholic lords flocked to the camp at Tilbury, or put off to join the fleet in the Channel, Elizabeth could pride herself on a victory as great as the victory over the Armada. She had won it by her patience and moderation, by her refusal to lend herself to the fanaticism of the Puritan or the reaction of the Papist, by her sympathy with the mass of the people, by her steady and unflinching preference of national union to any passing considerations of safety or advantage. For thirty years, amidst the shock of religious passions at home and abroad, she had reigned not as a Catholic or as a Protestant Queen, but as a Queen of England, and it was to England, Catholic and Protestant alike, that she could appeal in her hour of need. "Let tyrants fear," she exclaimed in words that still ring like the sound of a trumpet, as she appeared among her soldiers. "Let tyrants fear! I have always so behaved myself that under God I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and goodwill of my subjects! And therefore I am come among you, as you see, resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live and die amongst you all." The work of Edward and of Mary was undone, and the strife of religions fell powerless before the sense of a common country.

Nor were the results of the victory less momentous to Europe at large. What Wolsey and Henry had struggled for, Elizabeth had done. At her accession England was scarcely reckoned among European powers. The wisest statesmen looked on her as doomed to fall into the hands of France, or to escape that fate by remaining a dependency of Spain. But the national independence had grown with the national life. France was no longer a danger, Scotland was no longer a foe. Instead of hanging

*Its
European
results.*

CHAP. VI. on the will of Spain, England had fronted Spain and conquered her. She now stood on a footing of equality with the greatest powers of the world. Her military weight indeed was drawn from the discord which rent the peoples about her, and would pass away with its close. But a new and lasting greatness opened on the sea. She had sprung at a bound into a sea-power. Her fleets were spreading terror through the New World as through the Old. When Philip by his conquest of Portugal had gathered the two greatest navies of the world into his single hand, England had faced him and driven his fleet from the seas. But the rise of England was even less memorable than the fall of Spain. That Spain had fallen few of the world's statesmen saw then. Philip thanked God that he could easily, if he chose, "place another fleet upon the seas," and the despatch of a second armada soon afterwards showed that his boast was a true one. But what had vanished was his mastery of the seas. The defeat of the Armada was the first of a series of defeats at the hands of the English and the Dutch. The naval supremacy of Spain was lost, and with it all was lost; for an empire so widely scattered over the world, and whose dominions were parted by intervening nations, could only be held together by its command of the seas. One century saw Spain stripped of the bulk of the Netherlands, another of her possessions in Italy, a third of her dominions in the New World. But slowly as her empire broke, the cause of ruin was throughout the same. It was the loss of her maritime supremacy that robbed her of all, and her maritime supremacy was lost in the wreck of the Armada.

*The
counter-
attack on
Spain.*

If Philip met the shock with a calm patience, it at once ruined his plans in the West. France broke again from his grasp. Since the day of the Barricades Henry the Third had been virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Duke of Guise; but the defeat of the Armada woke him to a new effort for the recovery of power, and at the close of 1588 Guise was summoned to his presence and stabbed as

he entered by the royal body-guard. The blow broke the strength of the League. The Duke of Mayenne, a brother of the victim, called indeed the Leaguers to arms; and made war upon the King. But Henry found help in his cousin, Henry of Navarre, who brought a Huguenot force to his aid; and the moderate Catholics rallied as of old round the Crown. The Leaguers called on Philip for aid, but Philip was forced to guard against attack at home. Elizabeth had resolved to give blow for blow. The Portuguese were writhing under Spanish conquest; and a claimant of the crown, Don Antonio, who had found refuge in England, promised that on his landing the country would rise in arms. In the spring of 1589 therefore an expedition of fifty vessels and 15,000 men was sent under Drake and Sir John Norris against Lisbon. Its chances of success hung on a quick arrival in Portugal, but the fleet touched at Corunna, and after burning the ships in its harbour the army was tempted to besiege the town. A Spanish army which advanced to its relief was repulsed by an English force of half its numbers. Corunna however held stubbornly out, and in the middle of May Norris was forced to break the siege and to sail to Lisbon. But the delay had been fatal to his enterprise. The country did not rise; the English troops were thinned with sickness; want of cannon hindered a siege; and after a fruitless march up the Tagus Norris fell back on the fleet. The coast was pillaged, and the expedition returned baffled to England. Luckless as the campaign had proved, the bold defiance of Spain and the defeat of a Spanish army on Spanish ground kindled a new daring in Englishmen while they gave new heart to Philip's enemies. In the summer of 1589 Henry the Third laid siege to Paris. The fears of the League were removed by the knife of a priest, Jacques Clement, who assassinated the King in August; but Henry of Navarre, or, as he now became, Henry the Fourth, stood next to him in line of blood, and

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Philip saw with dismay a Protestant mount the throne of France.

From this moment the thought of attack on England, even his own warfare in the Netherlands, was subordinated in the mind of the Spanish King to the need of crushing Henry the Fourth. It was not merely that Henry's Protestantism threatened to spread heresy over the West. Catholic or Protestant, the union of France under an active and enterprising ruler would be equally fatal to Philip's designs. Once gathered round its King, France was a nearer obstacle to the re-conquest of the Netherlands than ever England could be. On the other hand, the religious strife, to which Henry's accession gave a fresh life and vigour, opened wide prospects to Philip's ambition. Far from proving a check upon Spain, it seemed as if France might be turned into a Spanish dependency. While the Leaguers proclaimed the Cardinal of Bourbon King, under the name of Charles the Tenth, they recognized Philip as Protector of France. Their hope indeed lay in his aid, and their army was virtually his own. On the other hand Henry the Fourth was environed with difficulties. It was only by declaring his willingness to be "further instructed" in matters of faith, in other words by holding out hopes of his conversion, that he succeeded in retaining the moderate Catholics under his standard. His desperate bravery alone won a victory at Yvry over the forces of the League, which enabled him to again form the siege of Paris in 1590. All recognized Paris as the turning point in the struggle, and the League called loudly for Philip's aid. To give it was to break the work which Parma was doing in the Netherlands, and to allow the United Provinces a breathing space in their sorest need. But even the Netherlands were of less moment than the loss of France; and Philip's orders forced Parma to march to the relief of Paris. The work was done with a skill which proved the Duke to be a master in the art of war. The siege of Paris

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was raised; the efforts of Henry to bring the Spaniards to an engagement were foiled; and it was only when the King's army broke up from sheer weariness that Parma withdrew unharmed to the north.

England was watching the struggle of Henry the Fourth with a keen interest. The failure of the expedition against Lisbon had put an end for the time to any direct attacks upon Spain, and the exhaustion of the treasury forced Elizabeth to content herself with issuing commissions to volunteers. But the war was a national one, and the nation waged it for itself. Merchants, gentlemen, nobles fitted out privateers. The sea-dogs in ever growing numbers scoured the Spanish Main. Their quest had its ill chances as it had its good, and sometimes the prizes made were far from paying for the cost of the venture. "Paul might plant, and Apollos might water," John Hawkins explained after an unsuccessful voyage, "but it is God only that giveth the increase!" But more often the profit was enormous. Spanish galleons, Spanish merchant-ships, were brought month after month to English harbours. The daring of the English seamen faced any odds. Ten English trading vessels beat off twelve Spanish war-galleys in the Straits of Gibraltar. Sir Richard Grenville in a single bark, the *Revenge*, found himself girt in by fifty men-of-war, each twice as large as his own. He held out from afternoon to the following daybreak, beating off attempt after attempt to board him; and it was not till his powder was spent, more than half his crew killed, and the rest wounded, that the ship struck its flag. Grenville had refused to surrender, and was carried mortally wounded to die in a Spanish ship. "Here die I, Richard Grenville," were his last words, "with a joyful and a quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a good soldier ought to do, who has fought for his country and his queen, for honour and religion." But the drift of the French war soon forced Elizabeth back again into the strife. In each of the French provinces the civil war went on: and in

CHAP. VI. Brittany, where the contest raged fiercest, Philip sent the Leaguers a supply of Spanish troops. Normandy was already in Catholic hands, and the aim of the Spanish King was to secure the western coast for future operations against England. Elizabeth pressed Henry the Fourth to foil these projects, and in the winter of 1591 she sent money and men to aid him in the siege of Rouen.

Henry's
con-
version.

To save Rouen Philip was again forced to interrupt his work of conquest in the Netherlands. Parma marched anew into the heart of France, and with the same consummate generalship as of old relieved the town without giving Henry a chance of battle. But the day was fast going against the Leaguers. The death of their puppet-king, Charles the Tenth, left them without a sovereign to oppose to Henry of Navarre; and their scheme of conferring the crown on Isabella, Philip's daughter by Elizabeth of France, with a husband whom Philip should choose, awoke jealousies in the house of Guise itself, while it gave strength to the national party who shrank from laying France at the feet of Spain. Even the Parliament of Paris, till now the centre of Catholic fanaticism, protested against setting the crown of France on the brow of a stranger. The politicians drew closer to Henry of Navarre, and the moderate Catholics pressed for his reconciliation to the Church as a means of restoring unity to the realm. The step had become so inevitable that even the Protestants were satisfied with Henry's promise of toleration; and in the summer of 1593 he declared himself a Catholic. With his conversion the civil war came practically to an end. It was in vain that Philip strove to maintain the zeal of the Leaguers, or that the Guises stubbornly kept the field. All France drew steadily to the King. Paris opened her gates in the spring of 1594, and the chief of the Leaguers, the Duke of Mayenne, submitted at the close of the year. Even Rome abandoned the contest, and at the end of 1595 Henry received solemn absolution from Clement the Eighth. From that moment

France rose again into her old power, and the old national policy of opposition to the House of Austria threw her weight into the wavering balance of Philip's fortunes. The death of Parma had already lightened the peril of the United Provinces, but though their struggle in the Low Countries was to last for years, from the moment of Henry the Fourth's conversion their independence was secure. Nor was the restoration of the French monarchy to its old greatness of less moment to England. Philip was yet to send an armada against her coasts; he was again to stir up a fierce revolt in northern Ireland. But all danger from Spain was over with the revival of France. Even were England to shrink from a strife in which she had held Philip so gloriously at bay, French policy would never suffer the island to fall unaided under the power of Spain. The fear of foreign conquest passed away. The long struggle for sheer existence was over. What remained was the Protestantism, the national union, the lofty patriotism, the pride in England and the might of Englishmen, which had drawn life more vivid and intense than they had ever known before from the long battle with the Papacy and with Spain.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE ENGLAND OF SHAKSPERE.

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*English
Litera-
ture.*

THE defeat of the Armada, the deliverance from Catholicism and Spain, marked the critical moment in our political development. From that hour England's destiny was fixed. She was to be a Protestant power. Her sphere of action was to be upon the seas. She was to claim her part in the New World of the West. But the moment was as critical in her intellectual development. As yet English literature had lagged behind the literature of the rest of Western Christendom. It was now to take its place among the greatest literatures of the world. The general awakening of national life, the increase of wealth, of refinement, and leisure that characterized the reign of Elizabeth, was accompanied by a quickening of intelligence. The Renaissance had done little for English letters. The overpowering influence of the new models both of thought and style which it gave to the world in the writers of Greece and Rome was at first felt only as a fresh check to the revival of English poetry or prose. Though England shared more than any European country in the political and ecclesiastical results of the New Learning, its literary results were far less than in the rest of Europe, in Italy, or Germany, or France. More alone ranks among the great classical scholars of the sixteenth century. Classical learning indeed all but perished at the Universities in the

storm of the Reformation, nor did it revive there till the close of Elizabeth's reign. Insensibly however the influences of the Renaissance fertilized the intellectual soil of England for the rich harvest that was to come. The court poetry which clustered round Wyatt and Surrey, exotic and imitative as it was, promised a new life for English verse. The growth of grammar-schools realized the dream of Sir Thomas More, and brought the middle-classes, from the squire to the petty tradesman, into contact with the masters of Greece and Rome. The love of travel, which became so remarkable a characteristic of Elizabeth's age, quickened the temper of the wealthier nobles. "Home-keeping youths," says Shakspeare in words that mark the time, "have ever homely wits;" and a tour over the Continent became part of the education of a gentleman. Fairfax's version of Tasso, Harrington's version of Ariosto, were signs of the influence which the literature of Italy, the land to which travel led most frequently, exerted on English minds. The classical writers told upon England at large when they were popularized by a crowd of translations. Chapman's noble version of Homer stands high above its fellows, but all the greater poets and historians of the ancient world were turned into English before the close of the sixteenth century.

It is characteristic of England that the first kind of literature to rise from its long death was the literature of history. But the form in which it rose marked the difference between the world in which it had perished and that in which it re-appeared. During the Middle Ages the world had been without a past, save the shadowy and unknown past of early Rome; and annalist and chronicler told the story of the years which went before as a preface to their tale of the present without a sense of any difference between them. But the religious, social, and political change which passed over England under the New Monarchy broke the continuity of its life; and

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the depth of the rift between the two ages is seen by the way in which History passes on its revival under Elizabeth from the mediæval form of pure narrative to its modern form of an investigation and reconstruction of the past. The new interest which attached to the bygone world led to the collection of its annals, their reprinting and embodiment in an English shape. It was his desire to give the Elizabethan Church a basis in the past, as much as any pure zeal for letters, which induced Archbishop Parker to lead the way in the first of these labours. The collection of historical manuscripts which, following in the track of Leland, he rescued from the wreck of the monastic libraries created a school of antiquarian imitators, whose research and industry have preserved for us almost every work of permanent historical value which existed before the Dissolution of the Monasteries. To his publication of some of our earlier chronicles we owe the series of similar publications which bear the name of Camden, Twysden, and Gale. But as a branch of literature, English History in the new shape which we have noted began in the work of the poet Daniel. The chronicles of Stowe and Speed, who preceded him, are simple records of the past, often copied almost literally from the annals they used, and utterly without style or arrangement; while Daniel, inaccurate and superficial as he is, gave his story a literary form and embodied it in a pure and graceful prose. Two larger works at the close of Elizabeth's reign, the "History of the Turks" by Knolles, and Raleigh's vast but unfinished plan of the "History of the World," showed a widening of historic interest beyond the merely national bounds to which it had hitherto been confined.

Euphu-
ism.

A far higher developement of our literature sprang from the growing influence which Italy was exerting, partly through travel and partly through its poetry and romances, on the manners and taste of the time. Men made more account of a story of Boccaccio's, it was said, than of a story from the Bible. The dress, the speech, the manners of

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Italy became objects of almost passionate imitation, and of an imitation not always of the wisest or noblest kind. To Ascham it seemed like "the enchantment of Circe brought out of Italy to mar men's manners in England." "An Italianate Englishman," ran the harder proverb of Italy itself, "is an incarnate devil." The literary form which this imitation took seemed at any rate ridiculous. John Lyly, distinguished both as a dramatist and a poet, laid aside the tradition of English style for a style modelled on the decadence of Italian prose. Euphuism, as the new fashion has been named from the prose romance of Euphues which Lyly published in 1579, is best known to modern readers by the pitiless caricature in which Shakspeare quizzed its pedantry, its affectation, the meaningless monotony of its far-fetched phrases, the absurdity of its extravagant conceits. Its representative, Armado in "Love's Labour's Lost," is "a man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight," "that hath a mint of phrases in his brain; one whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish like enchanting harmony." But its very extravagance sprang from the general burst of delight in the new resources of thought and language which literature felt to be at its disposal; and the new sense of literary beauty which it disclosed in its affectation, in its love of a "mint of phrases," and the "music of its ever vain tongue," the new sense of pleasure which it revealed in delicacy or grandeur of expression, in the structure and arrangement of sentences, in what has been termed the atmosphere of words, was a sense out of which style was itself to spring.

For a time Euphuism had it all its own way. Elizabeth was the most affected and detestable of Euphuists; and "that beauty in Court which could not parley Euphuism," a courtier of Charles the First's time tells us, "was as little regarded as she that now there speaks not French." The fashion however passed away, but the "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney shows the wonderful advance which

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prose had made under its influence. Sidney, the nephew of Lord Leicester, was the idol of his time, and perhaps no figure reflects the age more fully and more beautifully. Fair as he was brave, quick of wit as of affection, noble and generous in temper, dear to Elizabeth as to Spenser, the darling of the Court and of the camp, his learning and his genius made him the centre of the literary world which was springing into birth on English soil. He had travelled in France and Italy, he was master alike of the older learning and of the new discoveries of astronomy. Bruno dedicated to him as to a friend his metaphysical speculations; he was familiar with the drama of Spain, the poems of Ronsard, the sonnets of Italy. Sidney combined the wisdom of a grave councillor with the romantic chivalry of a knight-errant. "I never heard the old story of Percy and Douglas," he says, "that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet." He flung away his life to save the English army in Flanders, and as he lay dying they brought a cup of water to his fevered lips. He bade them give it to a soldier who was stretched on the ground beside him. "Thy necessity," he said, "is greater than mine." The whole of Sidney's nature, his chivalry and his learning, his thirst for adventures, his freshness of tone, his tenderness and childlike simplicity of heart, his affectation and false sentiment, his keen sense of pleasure and delight, pours itself out in the pastoral medley, forced, tedious, and yet strangely beautiful, of his "Arcadia." In his "Defence of Poetry" the youthful exuberance of the romancer has passed into the earnest vigour and grandiose stateliness of the rhetorician. But whether in the one work or the other, the flexibility, the music, the luminous clearness of Sidney's style remains the same.

The
Novelists.

But the quickness and vivacity of English prose was first developed in a school of Italian imitators which appeared in Elizabeth's later years. The origin of English fiction is to be found in the tales and romances with which

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Greene and Nash crowded the market, models for which they found in the Italian novels. The brief form of these novelettes soon led to the appearance of the "pamphlet;" and a new world of readers was seen in the rapidity with which the stories or scurrilous libels that passed under this name were issued, and the greediness with which they were devoured. It was the boast of Greene that in the eight years before his death he had produced forty pamphlets. "In a night or a day would he have yarked up a pamphlet, as well as in seven years, and glad was that printer that might be blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit." Modern eyes see less of the wit than of the dregs in the books of Greene and his compeers; but the attacks which Nash directed against the Puritans and his rivals were the first English works which shook utterly off the pedantry and extravagance of Euphuism. In his lightness, his facility, his vivacity, his directness of speech, we have the beginning of popular literature. It had descended from the closet to the street, and the very change implied that the street was ready to receive it. The abundance indeed of printers and of printed books at the close of the Queen's reign shows that the world of readers and writers had widened far beyond the small circle of scholars and courtiers with which it began.

But to the national and local influences which were telling on English literature was added that of the restlessness and curiosity which characterized the age. At the moment which we have reached the sphere of human interest was widened as it has never been widened before or since by the revelation of a new heaven and a new earth. It was only in the later years of the sixteenth century that the discoveries of Copernicus were brought home to the general intelligence of mankind by Kepler and Galileo, or that the daring of the Buccaneers broke through the veil which the greed of Spain had drawn across the New World of Columbus. Hardly inferior to these revelations as a source of intellectual impulse was the sudden and picturesque

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way in which the various races of the world were brought face to face with one another through the universal passion for foreign travel. While the red tribes of the West were described by Amerigo Vespucci, and the strange civilization of Mexico and Peru disclosed by Cortes and Pizarro, the voyages of the Portuguese threw open the older splendours of the East, and the story of India and China was told for the first time to Christendom by Maffei and Mendoza. England took her full part in this work of discovery. Jenkinson, an English traveller, made his way to Bokhara. Willoughby brought back Muscovy to the knowledge of Western Europe. English mariners penetrated among the Esquimaux, or settled in Virginia. Drake circumnavigated the globe. The "Collection of Voyages" which was published by Hakluyt in 1582 disclosed the vastness of the world itself, the infinite number of the races of mankind, the variety of their laws, their customs, their religions, their very instincts. We see the influence of this new and wider knowledge of the world, not only in the life and richness which it gave to the imagination of the time, but in the immense interest which from this moment attached itself to Man. Shakspeare's conception of Caliban, like the questioning of Montaigne, marks the beginning of a new and a truer, because a more inductive, philosophy of human nature and human history. The fascination exercised by the study of human character showed itself in the essays of Bacon, and yet more in the wonderful popularity of the drama.

The new
English
temper.

And to these larger and world-wide sources of poetic power was added in England, at the moment which we have reached in its story, the impulse which sprang from national triumph, from the victory over the Armada, the deliverance from Spain, the rolling away of the Catholic terror which had hung like a cloud over the hopes of the new people. With its new sense of security, its new sense of national energy and national power, the whole aspect of England suddenly changed. As yet

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the interest of Elizabeth's reign had been political and material; the stage had been crowded with statesmen and warriors, with Cecils and Walsinghams and Drakes. Literature had hardly found a place in the glories of the time. But from the moment when the Armada drifted back broken to Ferrol the figures of warriors and statesmen were dwarfed by the grander figures of poets and philosophers. Amidst the throng in Elizabeth's antechamber the noblest form is that of the singer who lays the "Faerie Queen" at her feet, or of the young lawyer who muses amid the splendours of the presence over the problems of the "Novum Organum." The triumph at Cadiz, the conquest of Ireland, pass unheeded as we watch Hooker building up his "Ecclesiastical Polity" among the sheep-folds, or the genius of Shakspeare rising year by year into supream grandeur in a rude theatre beside the Thames.

The glory of the new literature broke on England with Edmund Spenser. We know little of his life; he was born in 1552 in East London, the son of poor parents, but linked in blood with the Spencers of Althorpe, even then—as he proudly says—"a house of ancient fame." He studied as a sizar at Cambridge, and quitted the University while still a boy to live as a tutor in the north; but after some years of obscure poverty the scorn of a fair "Rosalind" drove him again southwards. A college friendship with Gabriel Harvey served to introduce him to Lord Leicester, who sent him as his envoy into France, and in whose service he first became acquainted with Leicester's nephew, Sir Philip Sidney. From Sidney's house at Penshurst came in 1579 his earliest work, the "Shepherd's Calendar;" in form, like Sidney's own "Arcadia," a pastoral where love and loyalty and Puritanism jostled oddly with the fancied shepherd life. The peculiar melody and profuse imagination which the pastoral disclosed at once placed its author in the forefront of living poets, but a far greater work was already in hand; and from some words of Gabriel Harvey's we see Spenser bent on rivalling

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Ariosto, and even hoping "to overgo" the "Orlando Furioso" in his "Elvish Queen." The ill-will or the indifference of Burleigh however blasted the expectations he had drawn from the patronage of Sidney or Leicester, and from the favour with which he had been welcomed by the Queen. Sidney, in disgrace with Elizabeth through his opposition to the marriage with Anjou, withdrew to Wilton to write the "Arcadia" by his sister's side; and "discontent of my long fruitless stay in princes' courts," the poet tells us, "and expectation vain of idle hopes" drove Spenser into exile. In 1580 he followed Lord Grey as his secretary into Ireland and remained there on the Deputy's recall in the enjoyment of an office and a grant of land from the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond. Spenser had thus enrolled himself among the colonists to whom England was looking at the time for the regeneration of Munster, and the practical interest he took in the "barren soil where cold and want and poverty do grow" was shown by the later publication of a prose tractate on the condition and government of the island. It was at Dublin or in his castle of Kilcolman, two miles from Doneraile, "under the foot of Mole, that mountain hoar," that he spent the ten years in which Sidney died and Mary fell on the scaffold and the Armada came and went; and it was in the latter home that Walter Raleigh found him sitting "alwaies idle," as it seemed to his restless friend, "among the coolly shades of the green alders by the Mulla's shore" in a visit made memorable by the poem of "Colin Clout's come home again."

The
Faerie
Queen

But in the "idlesse" and solitude of the poet's exile the great work begun in the two pleasant years of his stay at Penshurst had at last taken form, and it was to publish the first three books of the "Faerie Queen" that Spenser returned in Raleigh's company to London. The appearance of the "Faerie Queen" in 1590 is the one critical event in the annals of English poetry; it settled in fact the question whether there was to be such

a thing as English poetry or no. The older national verse which had blossomed and died in Caedmon sprang suddenly into a grander life in Chaucer, but it closed again in a yet more complete death. Across the Border indeed the Scotch poets of the fifteenth century preserved something of their master's vivacity and colour, and in England itself the Italian poetry of the Renaissance had of late found echoes in Surrey and Sidney. The new English drama too was beginning to display its wonderful powers, and the work of Marlowe had already prepared the way for the work of Shakspeare. But bright as was the promise of coming song, no great imaginative poem had broken the silence of English literature for nearly two hundred years when Spenser landed at Bristol with the "Faerie Queen." From that moment the stream of English poetry has flowed on without a break. There have been times, as in the years which immediately followed, when England has "become a nest of singing birds;" there have been times when song was scant and poor; but there never has been a time when England was wholly without a singer.

The new English verse has been true to the source from which it sprang, and Spenser has always been "the poet's poet." But in his own day he was the poet of England at large. The "Faerie Queen" was received with a burst of general welcome. It became "the delight of every accomplished gentleman, the model of every poet, the solace of every soldier." The poem expressed indeed the very life of the time. It was with a true poetic instinct that Spenser fell back for the framework of his story on the faery world of Celtic romance, whose wonder and mystery had in fact become the truest picture of the wonder and mystery of the world around him. In the age of Cortes and of Raleigh dreamland had ceased to be dreamland, and no marvel or adventure that befell lady or knight was stranger than the tales which weather-beaten mariners from the Southern Seas were telling every day to grave merchants upon 'Change. The very incongruities of the

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CHAP. VII. story of Arthur and his knighthood, strangely as it had been built up out of the rival efforts of bard and jongleur and priest, made it the fittest vehicle for the expression of the world of incongruous feeling which we call the Renascence. To modern eyes perhaps there is something grotesque in the strange medley of figures that crowd the canvas of the "Faerie Queen," in its fauns dancing on the sward where knights have hurtled together, in its alternation of the salvage-men from the New World with the satyrs of classic mythology, in the giants, dwarfs, and monsters of popular fancy who jostle with the nymphs of Greek legend and the damosels of mediæval romance. But, strange as the medley is, it reflects truly enough the stranger medley of warring ideals and irreconcilable impulses which made up the life of Spenser's contemporaries. It was not in the "Faerie Queen" only, but in the world which it portrayed, that the religious mysticism of the Middle Ages stood face to face with the intellectual freedom of the Revival of Letters, that asceticism and self-denial cast their spell on imaginations glowing with the sense of varied and inexhaustible existence, that the dreamy and poetic refinement of feeling which expressed itself in the fanciful unrealities of chivalry co-existed with the rough practical energy that sprang from an awakening sense of human power, or the lawless extravagance of an idealized friendship and love lived side by side with the moral sternness and elevation which England was drawing from the Reformation and the Bible.

But strangely contrasted as are the elements of the poem, they are harmonized by the calmness and serenity which is the note of the "Faerie Queen." The world of the Renascence is around us, but it is ordered, refined, and calmed by the poet's touch. The warmest scenes which he borrows from the Italian verse of his day are idealized into purity; the very struggle of the men around him is lifted out of its pettier accidents and raised into a spiritual oneness with the struggle in the soul itself. There are allusions in

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plenty to contemporary events, but the contest between Elizabeth and Mary takes ideal form in that of Una and the false Duessa, and the clash of arms between Spain and the Huguenots comes to us faint and hushed through the serener air. The verse, like the story, rolls on as by its own natural power, without haste or effort or delay. The gorgeous colouring, the profuse and often complex imagery which Spenser's imagination lavishes, leave no sense of confusion in the reader's mind. Every figure, strange as it may be, is seen clearly and distinctly as it passes by. It is in this calmness, this serenity, this spiritual elevation of the "Faerie Queen," that we feel the new life of the coming age moulding into ordered and harmonious form the life of the Renascence. Both in its conception, and in the way in which this conception is realized in the portion of his work which Spenser completed, his poem strikes the note of the coming Puritanism. In his earlier pastoral, the "Shepherd's Calendar," the poet had boldly taken his part with the more advanced reformers against the Church policy of the Court. He had chosen Archbishop Grindal, who was then in disgrace for his Puritan sympathies, as his model of a Christian pastor; and attacked with sharp invective the pomp of the higher clergy. His "Faerie Queen" in its religious theory is Puritan to the core. The worst foe of its "Red-cross Knight" is the false and scarlet-clad Duessa of Rome, who parts him for a while from Truth and leads him to the house of Ignorance. Spenser presses strongly and pitilessly for the execution of Mary Stuart. No bitter word ever breaks the calm of his verse save when it touches on the perils with which Catholicism was environing England, perils before which his knight must fall "were not that Heavenly Grace doth him uphold and steadfast Truth acquite him out of all." But it is yet more in the temper and aim of his work that we catch the nobler and deeper tones of English Puritanism. In his earlier musings at Penshurst the poet had purposed to surpass Ariosto, but

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the gaiety of Ariosto's song is utterly absent from his own. Not a ripple of laughter breaks the calm surface of Spenser's verse. He is habitually serious, and the seriousness of his poetic tone reflects the seriousness of his poetic purpose. His aim, he tells us, was to represent the moral virtues, to assign to each its knightly patron, so that its excellence might be expressed and its contrary vice trodden under foot by deeds of arms and chivalry. In knight after knight of the twelve he purposed to paint, he wished to embody some single virtue of the virtuous man in its struggle with the faults and errors which specially beset it; till in Arthur, the sum of the whole company, man might have been seen perfected, in his longing and progress towards the "Faerie Queen," the Divine Glory which is the true end of human effort.

The largeness of his culture indeed, his exquisite sense of beauty, and above all the very intensity of his moral enthusiasm, saved Spenser from the narrowness and exaggeration which often distorted goodness into unloveliness in the Puritan. Christian as he is to the core, his Christianity is enriched and fertilized by the larger temper of the Renaissance, as well as by a poet's love of the natural world in which the older mythologies struck their roots. Diana and the gods of heathendom take a sacred tinge from the purer sanctities of the new faith; and in one of the greatest songs of the "Faerie Queen" the conception of love widens, as it widened in the mind of a Greek, into the mighty thought of the productive energy of Nature. Spenser borrows in fact the delicate and refined forms of the Platonist philosophy to express his own moral enthusiasm. Not only does he love, as others have loved, all that is noble and pure and of good report, but he is fired as none before or after him have been fired with a passionate sense of moral beauty. Justice, Temperance, Truth, are no mere names to him, but real existences to which his whole nature clings with a rapturous affection. Outer beauty he believed to spring, and loved because it sprang

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from the beauty of the soul within. There was much in such a moral protest as this to rouse dislike in any age, but it is the glory of the age of Elizabeth that, "mad world" as in many ways it was, all that was noble welcomed the "Faerie Queen." Elizabeth herself, says Spenser, "to mine oaten pipe inclined her ear," and bestowed a pension on the poet. In 1595 he brought three more books of his poem to England. He returned to Ireland to commemorate his marriage in Sonnets and the most beautiful of bridal songs, and to complete the "Faerie Queen" amongst love and poverty and troubles from his Irish neighbours. But these troubles soon took a graver form. In 1599 Ireland broke into revolt, and the poet escaped from his burning house to fly to England, and to die broken-hearted in an inn at Westminster.

If the "Faerie Queen" expressed the higher elements of the Elizabethan age, the whole of that age, its lower elements and its higher alike, was expressed in the English drama. We have already pointed out the circumstances which throughout Europe were giving a poetic impulse to the newly-aroused intelligence of men, and this impulse everywhere took a dramatic shape. The artificial French tragedy which began about this time with Garnier was not indeed destined to exert any influence over English poetry till a later age; but the influence of the Italian comedy, which had begun half a century earlier with Machiavelli and Ariosto, was felt directly through the Novelle, or stories, which served as plots for our dramatists. It left its stamp indeed on some of the worst characteristics of the English stage. The features of our drama that startled the moral temper of the time and won the deadly hatred of the Puritans, its grossness and profanity, its tendency to scenes of horror and crime, its profuse employment of cruelty and lust as grounds of dramatic action, its daring use of the horrible and the unnatural whenever they enable it to display the more terrible and revolting sides of human passion, were derived from the

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Italian stage. It is doubtful how much the English playwrights may have owed to the Spanish drama, which under Lope and Cervantes sprang suddenly into a grandeur that almost rivalled their own. In the intermixture of tragedy and comedy, in the abandonment of the solemn uniformity of poetic diction for the colloquial language of real life, the use of unexpected incidents, the complication of their plots and intrigues, the dramas of England and Spain are remarkably alike; but the likeness seems rather to have sprung from a similarity in the circumstances to which both owed their rise, than to any direct connexion of the one with the other. The real origin of the English drama, in fact, lay not in any influence from without but in the influence of England itself. The temper of the nation was dramatic. Ever since the Reformation, the Palace, the Inns of Court, and the University had been vying with one another in the production of plays; and so early was their popularity that even under Henry the Eighth it was found necessary to create a "Master of the Revels" to supervise them. Every progress of Elizabeth from shire to shire was a succession of shows and interludes. Dian with her nymphs met the Queen as she returned from hunting; Love presented her with his golden arrow as she passed through the gates of Norwich. From the earlier years of her reign the new spirit of the Renascence had been pouring itself into the rough mould of the Mystery Plays, whose allegorical virtues and vices, or scriptural heroes and heroines, had handed on the spirit of the drama through the Middle Ages. Adaptations from classical pieces began to alternate with the purely religious "Moralities;" and an attempt at a livelier style of expression and invention appeared in the popular comedy of "Gammar Gurton's Needle;" while Sackville, Lord Dorset, in his tragedy of "Gorboduc" made a bold effort at sublimity of diction, and introduced the use of blank verse as the vehicle of dramatic dialogue.

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people.

But it was not to these tentative efforts of scholars and nobles that the English stage was really indebted for the amazing outburst of genius which dates from the year 1576, when "the Earl of Leicester's servants" erected the first public theatre in Blackfriars. It was the people itself that created its Stage. The theatre indeed was commonly only the courtyard of an inn, or a mere booth such as is still seen at a country fair. The bulk of the audience sate beneath the open sky in the "pit" or yard; a few covered seats in the galleries which ran round it formed the boxes of the wealthier spectators, while patrons and nobles found seats upon the actual boards. All the appliances were of the roughest sort: a few flowers served to indicate a garden, crowds and armies were represented by a dozen scene-shifters with swords and bucklers, heroes rode in and out on hobby-horses, and a scroll on a post told whether the scene was at Athens or London. There were no female actors, and the grossness which startles us in words which fell from women's lips took a different colour when every woman's part was acted by a boy. But difficulties such as these were more than compensated by the popular character of the drama itself. Rude as the theatre might be, all the world was there. The stage was crowded with nobles and courtiers. Apprentices and citizens thronged the benches in the yard below. The rough mob of the pit inspired, as it felt, the vigorous life, the rapid transitions, the passionate energy, the reality, the lifelike medley and confusion, the racy dialogue, the chat, the wit, the pathos, the sublimity, the rant and buffoonery, the coarse horrors and vulgar bloodshedding, the immense range over all classes of society, the intimacy with the foulest as well as the fairest developements of human temper, which characterized the English stage. The new drama represented "the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." The people itself brought its nobleness and its vileness to the boards. No stage was ever so human, no poetic life so intense. Wild, reckless,

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defiant of all past tradition, of all conventional laws, the English dramatists owned no teacher, no source of poetic inspiration, but the people itself.

Few events in our literary history are so startling as this sudden rise of the Elizabethan drama. The first public theatre was erected only in the middle of the Queen's reign. Before the close of it eighteen theatres existed in London alone. Fifty dramatic poets, many of the first order, appeared in the fifty years which precede the closing of the theatres by the Puritans; and great as is the number of their works which have perished, we still possess a hundred dramas, all written within this period, and of which at least a half are excellent. A glance at their authors shows us that the intellectual quickening of the age had now reached the mass of the people. Almost all of the new playwrights were fairly educated, and many were university men. But instead of courtly singers of the Sidney and Spenser sort we see the advent of the "poor scholar." The earlier dramatists, such as Nash, Peele, Kyd, Greene, or Marlowe, were for the most part poor, and reckless in their poverty; wild livers, defiant of law or common fame, in revolt against the usages and religion of their day, "atheists" in general repute, "holding Moses for a juggler," haunting the brothel and the alehouse, and dying starved or in tavern brawls. But with their appearance began the Elizabethan drama. The few plays which have reached us of an earlier date are either cold imitations or the classical and Italian comedy, or rude farces like "Ralph Roister Doister," or tragedies such as "Gorbuduc" where, poetic as occasional passages may be, there is little promise of dramatic development. But in the year which preceded the coming of the Armada the whole aspect of the stage suddenly changes, and the new dramatists range themselves around two men of very different genius, Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe.

Greene.

Of Greene, as the creator of our lighter English prose, we have already spoken. But his work as a poet was of

yet greater importance, for his perception of character and the relations of social life, the playfulness of his fancy, and the liveliness of his style, exerted an influence on his contemporaries which was equalled by that of none but Marlowe and Peele. In spite of the rudeness of his plots and the unequal character of his work Greene must be regarded as the creator of our modern comedy. No figure better paints the group of young playwrights. He left Cambridge to travel through Italy and Spain, and to bring back the debauchery of the one and the scepticism of the other. In the words of remorse he wrote before his death he paints himself as a drunkard and a roysterer, winning money only by ceaseless pamphlets and plays to waste it on wine and women, and drinking the cup of life to the dregs. Hell and the after-world were the butts of his ceaseless mockery. If he had not feared the judges of the Queen's Courts more than he feared God, he said in bitter jest, he should often have turned cutpurse. He married, and loved his wife, but she was soon deserted; and the wretched profligate found himself again plunged into excesses which he loathed, though he could not live without them. But wild as was the life of Greene, his pen was pure. He is steadily on virtue's side in the love pamphlets and novelettes he poured out in endless succession, and whose plots were dramatized by the school which gathered round him.

The life of Marlowe was as riotous, his scepticism even more daring, than the life and scepticism of Greene. His early death alone saved him in all probability from a prosecution for atheism. He was charged with calling Moses a juggler, and with boasting that, if he undertook to write a new religion, it should be a better religion than the Christianity he saw around him. But he stood far ahead of his fellows as a creator of English tragedy. Born in 1564 at the opening of Elizabeth's reign, the son of a Canterbury shoemaker, but educated at Cambridge, Marlowe burst on the world in the year which preceded

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the triumph over the Armada with a play which at once wrought a revolution in the English stage. Bombastic and extravagant as it was, and extravagance reached its height in a scene where captive kings, the "pampered jades of Asia," drew their conqueror's car across the stage, "Tamburlaine" not only indicated the revolt of the new drama against the timid inanities of Euphuism, but gave an earnest of that imaginative daring, the secret of which Marlowe was to bequeath to the playwrights who followed him. He perished at thirty in a shameful brawl, but in his brief career he had struck the grander notes of the coming drama. His *Jew of Malta* was the herald of *Shylock*. He opened in "Edward the Second" the series of historical plays which gave us "Cæsar" and "Richard the Third." His "Faustus" is riotous, grotesque, and full of a mad thirst for pleasure, but it was the first dramatic attempt to touch the problem of the relations of man to the unseen world. Extravagant, unequal, stooping even to the ridiculous in his cumbrous and vulgar buffoonery, there is a force in Marlowe, a conscious grandeur of tone, a range of passion, which sets him above all his contemporaries save one. In the higher qualities of imagination, as in the majesty and sweetness of his "mighty line," he is inferior to Shakspeare alone.

Shak-
spere.

A few daring jests, a brawl, and a fatal stab, make up the life of Marlowe; but even details such as these are wanting to the life of William Shakspeare. Of hardly any great poet indeed do we know so little. For the story of his youth we have only one or two trifling legends, and these almost certainly false. Not a single letter or characteristic saying, not one of the jests "spoken at the Mermaid," hardly a single anecdote, remain to illustrate his busy life in London. His look and figure in later age have been preserved by the bust over his tomb at Stratford, and a hundred years after his death he was still remembered in his native town; but the minute diligence of the enquirers of the Georgian time was able to glean hardly a single

detail, even of the most trivial order, which could throw light upon the years of retirement before his death. It is owing perhaps to the harmony and unity of his temper that no salient peculiarity seems to have left its trace on the memory of his contemporaries; it is the very grandeur of his genius which precludes us from discovering any personal trait in his works. His supposed self-revelation in the *Sonnets* is so obscure that only a few outlines can be traced even by the boldest conjecture. In his dramas he is all his characters, and his characters range over all mankind. There is not one, or the act or word of one that we can identify personally with the poet himself.

He was born in 1564, the sixth year of Elizabeth's reign, twelve years after the birth of Spenser, three years later than the birth of Bacon. Marlowe was of the same age with Shakspeare: Greene probably a few years older. His father, a glover and small farmer of Stratford-on-Avon, was forced by poverty to lay down his office of alderman as his son reached boyhood; and stress of poverty may have been the cause which drove William Shakspeare, who was already married at eighteen to a wife older than himself, to London and the stage. His life in the capital can hardly have begun later than in his twenty-third year, the memorable year which followed Sidney's death, which preceded the coming of the Armada, and which witnessed the production of Marlowe's "Tamburlaine." If we take the language of the *Sonnets* as a record of his personal feeling, his new profession as an actor stirred in him only the bitterness of self-contempt. He chides with Fortune "that did not better for my life provide than public means that public manners breed;" he writhes at the thought that he has "made himself a motley to the view" of the gaping apprentices in the pit of Blackfriars. "Thence comes it," he adds, "that my name receives a brand, and almost thence my nature is subdued to that it works in." But the application of the words is a more than doubtful one. In spite of petty squabbles with some of his dramatic

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rivals at the outset of his career, the genial nature of the newcomer seems to have won him a general love among his fellows. In 1592, while still a mere actor and fitter of old plays for the stage, a fellow-playwright, Chettle, answered Greene's attack on him in words of honest affection: "Myself have seen his demeanour no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes: besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art." His partner Burbage spoke of him after death as a "worthy friend and fellow;" and Jonson handed down the general tradition of his time when he described him as "indeed honest, and of an open and free nature."

His profession as an actor was at any rate of essential service to him in the poetic career which he soon undertook. Not only did it give him the sense of theatrical necessities which makes his plays so effective on the boards, but it enabled him to bring his pieces as he wrote them to the test of the stage. If there is any truth in Jonson's statement that Shakspeare never blotted a line, there is no justice in the censure which it implies on his carelessness or incorrectness. The conditions of poetic publication were in fact wholly different from those of our own day. A drama remained for years in manuscript as an acting piece, subject to continual revision and amendment; and every rehearsal and representation afforded hints for change which we know the young poet was far from neglecting. The chance which has preserved an earlier edition of his "Hamlet" shows in what an unsparing way Shakspeare could recast even the finest products of his genius. Five years after the supposed date of his arrival in London he was already famous as a dramatist. Greene speaks bitterly of him under the name of "Shakescene" as an "upstart crow beautified with our feathers," a sneer which points either to his celebrity as an actor or to his preparation for loftier flights

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by fitting pieces of his predecessors for the stage. He was soon partner in the theatre, actor, and playwright; and another nickname, that of "Johannes Factotum" or Jack-of-all-Trades, shows his readiness to take all honest work which came to hand.

With his publication in 1593 of the poem of "Venus and Adonis," "the first heir of my invention" as Shakspeare calls it, the period of independent creation fairly began. The date of its publication was a very memorable one. The "Faerie Queen" had appeared only three years before, and had placed Spenser without a rival at the head of English poetry. On the other hand the two leading dramatists of the time passed at this moment suddenly away. Greene died in poverty and self-reproach in the house of a poor shoemaker. "Doll," he wrote to the wife he had abandoned, "I charge thee, by the love of our youth and by my soul's rest, that thou wilt see this man paid; for if he and his wife had not succoured me I had died in the streets." "Oh, that a year were granted me to live," cried the young poet from his bed of death, "but I must die, of every man abhorred! Time, loosely spent, will not again be won! My time is loosely spent—and I undone!" A year later the death of Marlowe in a street brawl removed the only rival whose powers might have equalled Shakspeare's own. He was now about thirty; and the twenty-three years which elapsed between the appearance of the "Adonis" and his death were filled with a series of masterpieces. Nothing is more characteristic of his genius than its incessant activity. Through the five years which followed the publication of his early poem he seems to have produced on an average two dramas a year. When we attempt however to trace the growth and progress of the poet's mind in the order of his plays we are met in the case of many of them by an absence of certain information as to the dates of their appearance. The facts on which enquiry has to build are extremely few. "Venus and Adonis," with the "Lucrece,"

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must have been written before their publication in 1593-4; the Sonnets, though not published till 1609, were known in some form among his private friends as early as 1598. His earlier plays are defined by a list given in the "Wit's Treasury" of Francis Meres in 1598, though the omission of a play from a casual catalogue of this kind would hardly warrant us in assuming its necessary non-existence at the time. The works ascribed to him at his death are fixed in the same approximate fashion through the edition published by his fellow-actors. Beyond these meagre facts and our knowledge of the publication of a few of his dramas in his lifetime all is uncertain; and the conclusions which have been drawn from these, and from the dramas themselves, as well as from assumed resemblances with, or references to, other plays of the period can only be accepted as approximations to the truth.

His
earlier
comedies.

The bulk of his lighter comedies and historical dramas can be assigned with fair probability to a period from about 1593, when Shakspeare was known as nothing more than an adapter, to 1598, when they are mentioned in the list of Meres. They bear on them indeed the stamp of youth. In "Love's Labour's Lost" the young playwright, fresh from his own Stratford, its "daisies pied and violets blue," with the gay bright music of its country ditties still in his ears, flings himself into the midst of the brilliant England which gathered round Elizabeth, busying himself as yet for the most part with the surface of it, with the humours and quixotisms, the wit and the whim, the unreality, the fantastic extravagance, which veiled its inner nobleness. Country-lad as he is, Shakspeare shows himself master of it all; he can patter euphuism and exchange quip and repartee with the best; he is at home in their pedantries and affectations, their brag and their rhetoric, their passion for the fantastic and the marvellous. He can laugh as heartily at the romantic vagaries of the courtly world in which he finds himself as at the narrow dullness, the pompous triflings, of the country world which

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he has left behind him. But he laughs frankly and without malice; he sees the real grandeur of soul which underlies all this quixotry and word-play; and owns with a smile that when brought face to face with the facts of human life, with the suffering of man or the danger of England, these fops have in them the stuff of heroes. He shares the delight in existence, the pleasure in sheer living, which was so marked a feature of the age; he enjoys the mistakes, the contrasts, the adventures, of the men about him; his fun breaks almost riotously out in the practical jokes of the "Taming of the Shrew" and the endless blunderings of the "Comedy of Errors." In these earlier efforts his work had been marked by little poetic elevation, or by passion. But the easy grace of the dialogue, the dexterous management of a complicated story, the genial gaiety of his tone, and the music of his verse promised a master of social comedy as soon as Shakspeare turned from the superficial aspects of the world about him to find a new delight in the character and actions of men. The interest of human character was still fresh and vivid; the sense of individuality drew a charm from its novelty; and poet and essayist were busy alike in sketching the "humours" of mankind. Shakspeare sketched with his fellows. In the "Two Gentlemen of Verona" his painting of manners was suffused by a tenderness and ideal beauty which formed an effective protest against the hard though vigorous character-painting which the first success of Ben Jonson in "Every Man in his Humour" brought at the time into fashion. But quick on these lighter comedies followed two in which his genius started fully into life. His poetic power, held in reserve till now, showed itself with a splendid profusion in the brilliant fancies of the "Midsummer Night's Dream;" and passion swept like a tide of resistless delight through "Romeo and Juliet."

Side by side however with these passionate dreams, these delicate imaginings and piquant sketches of manners, had been appearing during this short interval of intense

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CHAP. VII. activity a series of dramas which mark Shakspeare's relation to the new sense of patriotism, the more vivid sense of national existence, national freedom, national greatness, which gives its grandeur to the age of Elizabeth. England itself was now becoming a source of literary interest to poet and prose-writer. Warner in his "Albion's England," Daniel in his "Civil Wars," embalmed in verse the record of her past; Drayton in his "Polyolbion" sang the fairness of the land itself, the "tracts, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Britain." The national pride took its highest poetic form in the historical drama. No plays seem to have been more popular from the earliest hours of the new stage than dramatic representations of our history. Marlowe had shown in his "Edward the Second" what tragic grandeur could be reached in this favourite field; and, as we have seen, Shakspeare had been led naturally towards it by his earlier occupation as an adapter of stock pieces like "Henry the Sixth" for the new requirements of the stage. He still to some extent followed in plan the older plays on the subjects he selected, but in his treatment of their themes he shook boldly off the yoke of the past. A larger and deeper conception of human character than any of the old dramatists had reached displayed itself in Richard the Third, in Falstaff, or in Hotspur; while in Constance and Richard the Second the pathos of human suffering was painted as even Marlowe had never dared to paint it.

*His
religious
sym-
pathies.*

No dramas have done so much for Shakspeare's enduring popularity with his countrymen as these historical plays. They have done more than all the works of English historians to nourish in the minds of Englishmen a love of and reverence for their country's past. When Chatham was asked where he had read his English history he answered, "In the plays of Shakspeare." Nowhere could he have read it so well, for nowhere is the spirit of our history so nobly rendered. If the poet's work

echoes sometimes our national prejudice and unfairness of temper, it is instinct throughout with English humour, with our English love of hard fighting, our English faith in goodness and in the doom that waits upon triumphant evil, our English pity for the fallen. Shakspeare is Elizabethan to the core. He stood at the meeting-point of two great epochs of our history. The age of the Renaissance was passing into the age of Puritanism. Rifts which were still little were widening every hour, and threatening ruin to the fabric of Church and State which the Tudors had built up. A new political world was rising into being; a world healthier, more really national, but less picturesque, less wrapt in the mystery and splendour that poets love. Great as were the faults of Puritanism, it may fairly claim to be the first political system which recognized the grandeur of the people as a whole. As great a change was passing over the spiritual sympathies of men. A sterner Protestantism was invigorating and ennobling life by its morality, its seriousness, its intense conviction of God. But it was at the same time hardening and narrowing it. The Bible was superseding Plutarch. The "obstinate questionings" which haunted the finer souls of the Renaissance were being stereotyped into the theological formulas of the Puritan. The sense of a divine omnipotence was annihilating man. The daring which turned England into a people of "adventurers," the sense of inexhaustible resources, the buoyant freshness of youth, the intoxicating sense of beauty and joy, which created Sidney and Marlowe and Drake, were passing away before the consciousness of evil and the craving to order man's life aright before God.

From this new world of thought and feeling Shakspeare stood aloof. Turn as others might to the speculations of theology, man and man's nature remained with him an inexhaustible subject of interest. Caliban was among his latest creations. It is impossible to discover whether his religious belief was Catholic or Protestant. It is hard

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indeed to say whether he had any religious belief or no. The religious phrases which are thinly scattered over his works are little more than expressions of a distant and imaginative reverence. But on the deeper grounds of religious faith his silence is significant. He is silent, and the doubt of Hamlet deepens his silence, about the after-world. "To die," it may be, was to him as it was to Claudio, "to go we know not whither." Often as his questionings turn to the riddle of life and death he leaves it a riddle to the last without heeding the common theological solutions around him. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

Nor were the political sympathies of the poet those of the coming time. His roll of dramas is the epic of civil war. The Wars of the Roses fill his mind, as they filled the mind of his contemporaries. It is not till we follow him through the series of plays from "Richard the Second" to "Henry the Eighth" that we realize how profoundly the memory of the struggle between York and Lancaster had moulded the temper of the people, how deep a dread of civil war, of baronial turbulence, of disputes over the succession to the throne, it had left behind it. Men had learned the horrors of the time from their fathers; they had drunk in with their childhood the lesson that such a chaos of weakness and misrule must never be risked again. From such a risk the Crown seemed the one security. With Shakspeare as with his fellow-countrymen the Crown is still the centre and safeguard of the national life. His ideal England is an England grouped around a noble king, a king such as his own Henry the Fifth, devout, modest, simple as he is brave, but a lord in battle, a born ruler of men, with a loyal people about him and his enemies at his feet. Socially the poet reflects the aristocratic view of social life which was shared by all the nobler spirits of the Elizabethan time. Coriolanus is the embodiment of a great noble; and the taunts which Shakspeare hurls in play after play at the rabble only echo the

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general temper of the Renaissance. But he shows no sympathy with the struggle of feudalism against the Crown. If he paints Hotspur with a fire which proves how thoroughly he could sympathize with the rough, bold temper of the baronage, he suffers him to fall unpitied before Henry the Fourth. Apart however from the strength and justice of its rule, royalty has no charm for him. He knows nothing of the "right divine of kings to govern wrong" which became the doctrine of prelates and courtiers in the age of the Stuarts. He shows in his "Richard the Second" the doom that waits on a lawless despotism, as he denounces in his "Richard the Third" the selfish and merciless ambition that severs a ruler from his people. But the dread of misrule was a dim and distant one. Shakspeare had grown up under the reign of Elizabeth; he had known no ruler save one who had cast a spell over the hearts of Englishmen. His thoughts were absorbed, as those of the country were absorbed, in the struggle for national existence which centred round the Queen. "King John" is a trumpet-call to rally round Elizabeth in her fight for England. Again a Pope was asserting his right to depose an English sovereign and to loose Englishmen from their bond of allegiance. Again political ambitions and civil discord woke at the call of religious war. Again a foreign power was threatening England at the summons of Rome, and hoping to master her with the aid of revolted Englishmen. The heat of such a struggle as this left no time for the thought of civil liberties. Shakspeare casts aside the thought of the Charter to fix himself on the strife of the stranger for England itself. What he sang was the duty of patriotism, the grandeur of loyalty, the freedom of England from Pope or Spaniard, its safety within its "water-walled bulwark," if only its national union was secure. And now that the nation was at one, now that he had seen in his first years of London life Catholics as well as Protestants trooping to the muster at Tilbury and hasting down Thames to the fight in the

CHAP. VII. Channel, he could thrill his hearers with the proud words that sum up the work of Elizabeth:—

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"This England never did, nor never shall,
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
But when it first did help to wound itself.
Now that her princes are come home again,
Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them! Nought shall make us rue
If England to itself do rest but true."

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spere's
prosperity.

With this great series of historical and social dramas Shakspeare had passed far beyond his fellows whether as a tragedian or as a writer of comedy. "The Muses," said Meres in 1598, "would speak with Shakspeare's fine-filèd phrase, if they would speak English." His personal popularity was now at its height. His pleasant temper and the vivacity of his wit had drawn him early into contact with the young Earl of Southampton, to whom his "Adonis" and "Lucrece" are dedicated; and the different tone of the two dedications shows how rapidly acquaintance ripened into an ardent friendship. Shakspeare's wealth and influence too were growing fast. He had property both in Stratford and London, and his fellow-townsmen made him their suitor to Lord Burleigh for favours to be bestowed on Stratford. He was rich enough to aid his father, and to buy the house at Stratford which afterwards became his home. The tradition that Elizabeth was so pleased with Falstaff in "Henry the Fourth" that she ordered the poet to show her Falstaff in love—an order which produced the "Merry Wives of Windsor"—whether true or false, proves his repute as a playwright. As the group of earlier poets passed away, they found successors in Marston, Dekker, Middleton, Heywood, and Chapman, and above all in Ben Jonson. But none of these could dispute the supremacy of Shakspeare. The verdict of Meres that "Shakspeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage," represented the general feeling of his contemporaries. He was at last fully master of the resources of his art. The

"Merchant of Venice" marks the perfection of his developement as a dramatist in the completeness of its stage effect, the ingenuity of its incidents, the ease of its movement, the beauty of its higher passages, the reserve and self-control with which its poetry is used, the conception and unfolding of character, and above all the mastery with which character and event is grouped round the figure of Shylock. Master as he is of his art, the poet's temper is still young; the "Merry Wives of Windsor" is a burst of gay laughter; and laughter more tempered, yet full of a sweeter fascination, rings round us in "As You Like It."

But in the melancholy and meditative Jaques of the last drama we feel the touch of a new and graver mood. Youth, so full and buoyant in the poet till now, seems to have passed almost suddenly away. Though Shakspeare had hardly reached forty, in one of his Sonnets which cannot have been written at a much later time than this there are indications that he already felt the advance of premature age. And at this moment the outer world suddenly darkened around him. The brilliant circle of young nobles whose friendship he had shared was broken up in 1601 by the political storm which burst in a mad struggle of the Earl of Essex for power. Essex himself fell on the scaffold; his friend and Shakspeare's idol, Southampton, passed a prisoner into the Tower; Herbert Lord Pembroke, a younger patron of the poet, was banished from the Court. While friends were thus falling and hopes fading without, Shakspeare's own mind seems to have been going through a phase of bitter suffering and unrest. In spite of the ingenuity of commentators, it is difficult and even impossible to derive any knowledge of Shakspeare's inner history from the Sonnets; "the strange imagery of passion which passes over the magic mirror," it has been finely said, "has no tangible evidence before or behind it." But its mere passing is itself an evidence of the restlessness and agony within. The change in

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the character of his dramas gives a surer indication of his change of mood. The fresh joyousness, the keen delight in life and in man, which breathes through Shakspeare's early work disappears in comedies such as "Troilus" and "Measure for Measure." Disappointment, disillusion, a new sense of the evil and foulness that underlies so much of human life, a loss of the old frank trust in its beauty and goodness, threw their gloom over these comedies. Failure seems everywhere. In "Julius Cæsar" the virtue of Brutus is foiled by its ignorance of and isolation from mankind; in Hamlet even penetrating intellect proves helpless for want of the capacity of action; the poison of Iago taints the love of Desdemona and the grandeur of Othello; Lear's mighty passion battles helplessly against the wind and the rain; a woman's weakness of frame dashes the cup of her triumph from the hand of Lady Macbeth; lust and self-indulgence blast the heroism of Antony; pride ruins the nobleness of Coriolanus.

His
passion
plays.

But the very struggle and self-introspection that these dramas betray were to give a depth and grandeur to Shakspeare's work such as it had never known before. The age was one in which man's temper and powers took a new range and energy. Sidney or Raleigh lived not one but a dozen lives at once; the daring of the adventurer, the philosophy of the scholar, the passion of the lover, the fanaticism of the saint, towered into almost superhuman grandeur. Man became conscious of the immense resources that lay within him, conscious of boundless powers that seemed to mock the narrow world in which they moved. All through the age of the Renascence one feels this impress of the gigantic, this giant-like activity, this immense ambition and desire. The very bombast and extravagance of the times reveal cravings and impulses before which common speech broke down. It is this grandeur of humanity that finds its poetic expression in the later work of Shakspeare. As the poet penetrated deeper and deeper into the recesses of the soul, he saw how

great and wondrous a thing was man. "What a piece of work is a man," cries Hamlet; "how noble in reason; how infinite in faculty; in form and moving how express and admirable; in action how like an angel; in apprehension how like a god; the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals!" It is the wonder of man that spreads before us as the poet pictures the wide speculation of Hamlet, the awful convulsion of a great nature in Othello, the terrible storm in the soul of Lear which blends with the very storm of the heavens themselves, the awful ambition that nerved a woman's hand to dabble itself with the blood of a murdered king, the reckless lust that "flung away a world for love." Amid the terror and awe of these great dramas we learn something of the vast forces of the age from which they sprang. The passion of Mary Stuart, the ruthlessness of Alva, the daring of Drake, the chivalry of Sydney, the range of thought and action in Raleigh or Elizabeth, come better home to us as we follow the mighty series of tragedies which began in "Hamlet" and ended in "Coriolanus."

Shakspeare's last dramas, the three exquisite works in which he shows a soul at rest with itself and with the world, "Cymbeline," "The Tempest," "Winter's Tale," were written in the midst of ease and competence, in a house at Stratford to which he withdrew a few years after the death of Elizabeth. In them we lose all relation with the world or the time and pass into a region of pure poetry. It is in this peaceful and gracious close that the life of Shakspeare contrasts most vividly with that of his greatest contemporary. If the imaginative resources of the new England were seen in the creators of Hamlet and the Faerie Queen, its purely intellectual capacity, its vast command over the stores of human knowledge, the amazing sense of its own powers with which it dealt with them, were seen in the work of Francis Bacon. Bacon was born in 1561, three years before the birth of Shakspeare. He was the younger son of a Lord Keeper,

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as well as the nephew of Lord Burleigh, and even in childhood his quickness and sagacity won the favour of the Queen. Elizabeth "delighted much to confer with him, and to prove him with questions: unto which he delivered himself with that gravity and maturity above his years that her Majesty would often term him 'the young Lord Keeper.'" Even as a boy at college he expressed his dislike of the Aristotelian philosophy, as "a philosophy only strong for disputations and contentions but barren of the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." As a law student of twenty-one he sketched in a tract on the "Greatest Birth of Time" the system of inductive enquiry which he was already prepared to substitute for it. The speculations of the young thinker however were interrupted by his hopes of Court success. But these were soon dashed to the ground. He was left poor by his father's death; the ill-will of the Cecils barred his advancement with the Queen: and a few years before Shakspeare's arrival in London Bacon entered as a barrister at Gray's Inn. He soon became one of the most successful lawyers of the time. At twenty-three Bacon was a member of the House of Commons, and his judgement and eloquence at once brought him to the front. "The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end," Ben Jonson tells us. The steady growth of his reputation was quickened in 1597 by the appearance of his "Essays," a work remarkable, not merely for the condensation of its thought and its felicity and exactness of expression, but for the power with which it applied to human life that experimental analysis which Bacon was at a later time to make the key of Science.

His fame at once became great at home and abroad, but with this nobler fame Bacon could not content himself. He was conscious of great powers as well as great aims for the public good: and it was a time when such aims could hardly be realized save through the means of the Crown. But political employment seemed farther off

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than ever. At the outset of his career in Parliament he irritated Elizabeth by a firm opposition to her demand of a subsidy; and though the offence was atoned for by profuse apologies and by the cessation of all further resistance to the policy of the Court, the law offices of the Crown were more than once refused to him, and it was only after the publication of his "Essays" that he could obtain some slight promotion as a Queen's Counsel. The moral weakness which more and more disclosed itself is the best justification of the Queen in her reluctance—a reluctance so greatly in contrast with her ordinary course—to bring the wisest head in her realm to her Council-board. The men whom Elizabeth employed were for the most part men whose intellect was directed by a strong sense of public duty. Their reverence for the Queen, strangely exaggerated as it may seem to us, was guided and controlled by an ardent patriotism and an earnest sense of religion; and with all their regard for the royal prerogative, they never lost their regard for the law. The grandeur and originality of Bacon's intellect parted him from men like these quite as much as the bluntness of his moral perceptions. In politics, as in science, he had little reverence for the past. Law, constitutional privileges, or religion, were to him simply means of bringing about certain ends of good government; and if these ends could be brought about in shorter fashion he saw only pedantry in insisting on more cumbrous means. He had great social and political ideas to realize, the reform and codification of the law, the civilization of Ireland, the purification of the Church, the union—at a later time—of Scotland and England, educational projects, projects of material improvement, and the like; and the direct and shortest way of realizing these ends was, in Bacon's eyes, the use of the power of the Crown. But whatever charm such a conception of the royal power might have for her successor, it had little charm for Elizabeth; and to the end of her reign Bacon was foiled in his efforts to rise in her service.

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The
Novum
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Political activity however and court intrigue left room in his mind for the philosophical speculation which had begun with his earliest years. Amidst debates in parliament and flatteries in the closet Bacon had been silently framing a new philosophy. It made its first decisive appearance after the final disappointment of his hopes from Elizabeth in the publication of the "Advancement of Learning." The close of this work was, in his own words, "a general and faithful perambulation of learning, with an enquiry what parts thereof lie fresh and waste and not improved and converted by the industry of man; to the end that such a plot, made and recorded to memory, may both minister light to any public designation and also serve to excite voluntary endeavours." It was only by such a survey, he held, that men could be turned from useless studies, or ineffectual means of pursuing more useful ones, and directed to the true end of knowledge as "a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate." The work was in fact the preface to a series of treatises which were intended to be built up into an "Instauratio Magna," which its author was never destined to complete, and of which the parts that we possess were published in the following reign. The "Cogitata et Visa" was a first sketch of the "Novum Organum," which in its complete form was presented to James in 1621. A year later Bacon produced his "Natural and Experimental History." This, with the "Novum Organum" and the "Advancement of Learning," was all of his projected "Instauratio Magna" which he actually finished; and even of this portion we have only part of the last two divisions. The "Ladder of the Understanding," which was to have followed these and led up from experience to science, the "Anticipations," or provisional hypotheses for the enquiries of the new philosophy, and the closing account of "Science in Practice" were left for posterity to bring to completion. "We may, as we trust,"

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said Bacon, "make no despicable beginnings. The destinies of the human race must complete it, in such a manner perhaps as men looking only at the present world would not readily conceive. For upon this will depend, not only a speculative good, but all the fortunes of mankind, and all their power."

When we turn from words like these to the actual work which Bacon did, it is hard not to feel a certain disappointment. He did not thoroughly understand the older philosophy which he attacked. His revolt from the waste of human intelligence which he conceived to be owing to the adoption of a false method of investigation blinded him to the real value of deduction as an instrument of discovery; and he was encouraged in his contempt for it as much by his own ignorance of mathematics as by the non-existence in his day of the great deductive sciences of physics and astronomy. Nor had he a more accurate prevision of the method of modern science. The inductive process to which he exclusively directed men's attention bore no fruit in Bacon's hands. The "art of investigating nature" on which he prided himself has proved useless for scientific purposes, and would be rejected by modern investigators. Where he was on a more correct track he can hardly be regarded as original. "It may be doubted," says Dugald Stewart, "whether any one important rule with regard to the true method of investigation be contained in his works of which no hint can be traced in those of his predecessors." Not only indeed did Bacon fail to anticipate the methods of modern science, but he even rejected the great scientific discoveries of his own day. He set aside with the same scorn the astronomical theory of Copernicus and the magnetic investigations of Gilbert. The contempt seems to have been fully returned by the scientific workers of his day. "The Lord Chancellor wrote on science," said Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, "like a Lord Chancellor."

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In spite however of his inadequate appreciation either of the old philosophy or the new, the almost unanimous voice of later ages has attributed, and justly attributed, to the "Novum Organum" a decisive influence on the development of modern science. If he failed in revealing the method of experimental research, Bacon was the first to proclaim the existence of a Philosophy of Science, to insist on the unity of knowledge and enquiry throughout the physical world, to give dignity by the large and noble temper in which he treated them to the petty details of experiment in which science had to begin, to clear a way for it by setting scornfully aside the traditions of the past, to claim for it its true rank and value, and to point to the enormous results which its culture would bring in increasing the power and happiness of mankind. In one respect his attitude was in the highest degree significant. The age in which he lived was one in which theology was absorbing the intellectual energy of the world. He was the servant too of a king with whom theological studies superseded all others. But if he bowed in all else to James, Bacon would not, like Casaubon, bow in this. He would not even, like Descartes, attempt to transform theology by turning reason into a mode of theological demonstration. He stood absolutely aloof from it. Though as a politician he did not shrink from dealing with such subjects as Church Reform, he dealt with them simply as matters of civil polity. But from his exhaustive enumeration of the branches of human knowledge he excluded theology, and theology alone. His method was of itself inapplicable to a subject where the premisses were assumed to be certain, and the results known. His aim was to seek for unknown results by simple experiment. It was against received authority and accepted tradition in matters of enquiry that his whole system protested; what he urged was the need of making belief rest strictly on proof, and proof rest on the conclusions drawn from evidence by reason. But in theology—all theologians asserted—reason played but a subordinate part. "If I

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proceed to treat of it," said Bacon, "I shall step out of the bark of human reason, and enter into the ship of the Church. Neither will the stars of philosophy, which have hitherto so nobly shone on us, any longer give us their light."

The certainty indeed of conclusions on such subjects was out of harmony with the grandest feature of Bacon's work, his noble confession of the liability of every enquirer to error. It was his especial task to warn men against the "vain shows" of knowledge which had so long hindered any real advance in it, the "idols" of the Tribe, the Den, the Forum, and the Theatre, the errors which spring from the systematizing spirit which pervades all masses of men, or from individual idiosyncracies, or from the strange power of words and phrases over the mind, or from the traditions of the past. Nor were the claims of theology easily to be reconciled with the position which he was resolute to assign to natural science. "Through all those ages," Bacon says, "wherein men of genius or learning principally or even moderately flourished, the smallest part of human industry has been spent on natural philosophy, though this ought to be esteemed as the great mother of the sciences; for all the rest, if torn from this root, may perhaps be polished and formed for use, but can receive little increase." It was by the adoption of the method of inductive enquiry which physical science was to make its own, and by basing enquiry on grounds which physical science could supply, that the moral sciences, ethics and politics, could alone make any real advance. "Let none expect any great promotion of the sciences, especially in their effective part, unless natural philosophy be drawn out to particular sciences; and, again, unless these particular sciences be brought back again to natural philosophy. From this defect it is that astronomy, optics, music, many mechanical arts, and (what seems stranger) even moral and civil philosophy and logic rise but little above the foundations, and only skim over the varieties

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and surfaces of things." It was this lofty conception of the position and destiny of natural science which Bacon was the first to impress upon mankind at large. The age was one in which knowledge was passing to fields of enquiry which had till then been unknown, in which Kepler and Galileo were creating modern astronomy, in which Descartes was revealing the laws of motion, and Harvey the circulation of the blood. But to the mass of men this great change was all but imperceptible; and it was the energy, the profound conviction, the eloquence of Bacon which first called the attention of mankind as a whole to the power and importance of physical research. It was he who by his lofty faith in the results and victories of the new philosophy nerved its followers to a zeal and confidence equal to his own. It was he above all who gave dignity to the slow and patient processes of investigation, of experiment, of comparison, to the sacrifice of hypothesis to fact, to the single aim after truth, which was to be the law of modern science.

Advance
of the
Parliament.

While England thus became "a nest of singing birds," while Bacon was raising the lofty fabric of his philosophical speculation, the people itself was waking to a new sense of national freedom. Elizabeth saw the forces, political and religious, which she had stubbornly held in check for half a century pressing on her irresistibly. In spite of the rarity of its assemblings, in spite of high words and imprisonment and dexterous management, the Parliament had quietly gained a power which, at her accession, the Queen could never have dreamed of its possessing. Step by step the Lower House had won the freedom of its members from arrest save by its own permission, the right of punishing and expelling members for crimes committed within its walls, and of determining all matters relating to elections. The more important claim of freedom of speech had brought on from time to time a series of petty conflicts in which Elizabeth generally gave way. But on this point the Commons still shrank from any consistent

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repudiation of the Queen's assumption of control. A bold protest of Peter Wentworth against her claim to exercise such a control in 1575 was met indeed by the House itself with his committal to the Tower; and the bolder questions which he addressed to the Parliament of 1588, "Whether this Council is not a place for every member of the same freely and without control, by bill or speech, to utter any of the griefs of the Commonwealth," brought on him a fresh imprisonment at the hands of the Council, which lasted till the dissolution of the Parliament and with which the Commons declined to interfere. But while vacillating in its assertion of the rights of individual members, the House steadily claimed for itself a right to discuss even the highest matters of State. Three great subjects, the succession, the Church, and the regulation of trade, had been regarded by every Tudor sovereign as lying exclusively within the competence of the Crown. But Parliament had again and again asserted its right to consider the succession. It persisted in spite of censure and rebuff in presenting schemes of ecclesiastical reform. And three years before Elizabeth's death it dealt boldly with matters of trade. Complaints made in 1571 of the licences and monopolies by which internal and external commerce were fettered were repressed by a royal reprimand as matters neither pertaining to the Commons nor within the compass of their understanding. When the subject was again stirred nearly twenty years afterwards, Sir Edward Hoby was sharply rebuked by "a great personage" for his complaint of the illegal exactions made by the Exchequer. But the bill which he promoted was sent up to the Lords in spite of this, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the storm of popular indignation which had been roused by the growing grievance nerved the Commons, in 1601, to a decisive struggle. It was in vain that the ministers opposed a bill for the Abolition of Monopolies, and after four days of vehement debate the tact of Elizabeth taught her to give way. She acted with her usual ability, declared her

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previous ignorance of the existence of the evil, thanked the House for its interference, and quashed at a single blow every monopoly that she had granted.

Dexterous as was Elizabeth's retreat, the defeat was none the less a real one. Political freedom was proving itself again the master in the long struggle with the Crown. Nor in her yet fiercer struggle against religious freedom could Elizabeth look forward to any greater success. The sharp suppression of the Martin Mar-prelate pamphlets was far from damping the courage of the Presbyterians. Cartwright, who had been appointed by Lord Leicester to the mastership of an hospital at Warwick, was bold enough to organize his system of Church discipline among the clergy of that county and of Northamptonshire. His example was widely followed; and the general gatherings of the whole ministerial body of the clergy and the smaller assemblies for each diocese or shire, which in the Presbyterian scheme bore the name of Synods and Classes, began to be held in many parts of England for the purposes of debate and consultation. The new organization was quickly suppressed, but Cartwright was saved from the banishment which Whitgift demanded by a promise of submission, and his influence steadily widened. With Presbyterianism itself indeed Elizabeth was strong enough to deal. Its dogmatism and bigotry was opposed to the better temper of the age, and it never took any popular hold on England. But if Presbyterianism was limited to a few, Puritanism, the religious temper which sprang from a deep conviction of the truth of Protestant doctrines and of the falsehood of Catholicism, had become through the struggle with Spain and the Papacy the temper of three-fourths of the English people. Unluckily the policy of Elizabeth did its best to give to the Presbyterians the support of Puritanism. Her establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission had given fresh life and popularity to the doctrines which it aimed at crushing by drawing together

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two currents of opinion which were in themselves perfectly distinct. The Presbyterian platform of Church discipline had as yet been embraced by the clergy only, and by few among the clergy. On the other hand, the wish for a reform in the Liturgy, the dislike of "superstitious usages," of the use of the surplice, the sign of the cross in baptism, the gift of the ring in marriage, the posture of kneeling at the Lord's Supper, was shared by a large number of the clergy and the laity alike. At the opening of Elizabeth's reign almost all the higher Churchmen save Parker were opposed to them, and a motion for their abolition in Convocation was lost but by a single vote. The temper of the country gentlemen on this subject was indicated by that of Parliament; and it was well known that the wisest of the Queen's Councillors, Burleigh, Walsingham, and Knollys, were at one time in this matter with the gentry. If their common persecution did not wholly succeed in fusing these two sections of religious opinion into one, it at any rate gained for the Presbyterians a general sympathy on the part of the Puritans, which raised them from a clerical clique into a popular party.

But if Elizabeth's task became more difficult at home, the last years of her reign were years of splendour and triumph abroad. The overthrow of Philip's hopes in France had been made more bitter by the final overthrow of his hopes at sea. In 1596 his threat of a fresh Armada was met by the daring descent of an English force upon Cadiz. The town was plundered and burned to the ground; thirteen vessels of war were fired in its harbour, and the stores accumulated for the expedition utterly destroyed. In spite of this crushing blow a Spanish fleet gathered in the following year and set sail for the English coast; but as in the case of its predecessor storms proved more fatal than the English guns, and the ships were wrecked and almost destroyed in the Bay of Biscay. Meanwhile whatever hopes remained of subjecting the Low Countries were destroyed by the triumph of Henry of Navarre. A

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triple league of France, England, and the Netherlands left Elizabeth secure to the eastward; and the only quarter in which Philip could now strike a blow at her was the great dependency of England in the west. Since the failure of the Spanish force at Smerwick the power of the English government had been recognized everywhere throughout Ireland. But it was a power founded solely on terror, and the outrages and exactions of the soldiery who had been flushed with rapine and bloodshed in the south sowed during the years which followed the reduction of Munster the seeds of a revolt more formidable than any which Elizabeth had yet encountered. The tribes of Ulster, divided by the policy of Sidney, were again united by a common hatred of their oppressors; and in Hugh O'Neill they found a leader of even greater ability than Shane himself. Hugh had been brought up at the English court and was in manners and bearing an Englishman. He had been rewarded for his steady loyalty in previous contests by a grant of the earldom of Tyrone, and in his contest with a rival chieftain of his clan he had secured aid from the government by an offer to introduce the English laws and shire-system into his new country. But he was no sooner undisputed master of the north than his tone gradually changed. Whether from a long-formed plan, or from suspicion of English designs upon himself, he at last took a position of open defiance.

Revolt of
Ulster.

It was at the moment when the Treaty of Vervins and the wreck of the second Armada freed Elizabeth's hands from the struggle with Spain that the revolt under Hugh O'Neill broke the quiet which had prevailed since the victories of Lord Grey. The Irish question again became the chief trouble of the Queen. The tide of her recent triumphs seemed at first to have turned. A defeat of the English forces in Tyrone caused a general rising of the northern tribes, and a great effort made in 1599 for the suppression of the growing revolt failed through the vanity

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and disobedience, if not the treacherous complicity, of the Queen's lieutenant, the young Earl of Essex. His successor, Lord Mountjoy, found himself master on his arrival of only a few miles round Dublin. But in three years the revolt was at an end. A Spanish force which landed to support it at Kinsale was driven to surrender; a line of forts secured the country as the English mastered it; all open opposition was crushed out by the energy and the ruthlessness of the new Lieutenant; and a famine which followed on his ravages completed the devastating work of the sword. Hugh O'Neill was brought in triumph to Dublin; the Earl of Desmond, who had again roused Munster into revolt, fled for refuge to Spain; and the work of conquest was at last brought to a close.

The triumph of Mountjoy flung its lustre over the last days of Elizabeth, but no outer triumph could break the gloom which gathered round the dying Queen. Lonely as she had always been, her loneliness deepened as she drew towards the grave. The statesmen and warriors of her earlier days had dropped one by one from her Council-board. Leicester had died in the year of the Armada; two years later Walsingham followed him to the grave; in 1598 Burleigh himself passed away. Their successors were watching her last moments, and intriguing for favour in the coming reign. Her favourite, Lord Essex, not only courted favour with James of Scotland, but brought him to suspect Robert Cecil, who had succeeded his father at the Queen's Council-board, of designs against his succession. The rivalry between the two ministers hurried Essex into fatal projects which led to his failure in Ireland and to an insane outbreak of revolt which brought him in 1601 to the block. But Cecil had no sooner proved the victor in this struggle at court than he himself entered into a secret correspondence with the King of Scots. His action was wise: it brought James again into friendly relations with the Queen; and paved the way for a peaceful transfer of the crown. But hidden as this correspondence

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was from Elizabeth, the suspicion of it only added to her distrust. The troubles of the war in Ireland brought fresh cares to the aged Queen. It drained her treasury. The old splendour of her Court waned and disappeared. Only officials remained about her, "the other of the Council and nobility estrange themselves by all occasions." The love and reverence of the people itself lessened as they felt the pressure and taxation of the war. Of old men had pressed to see the Queen as if it were a glimpse of heaven. "In the year 1588," a bishop tells us, who was then a country boy fresh come to town, "I did live at the upper end of the Strand near St. Clement's church, when suddenly there came a report to us, (it was in December, much about five of the clock at night, very dark) that the Queen was gone to Council, 'and if you will see the Queen you must come quickly. Then we all ran, when the Court gates were set open, and no man did hinder us from coming in. There we came, where there was a far greater company than was usually at Lenten sermons; and when we had staid there an hour and that the yard was full, there being a number of torches, the Queen came out in great state. Then we cried 'God save your Majesty! God save your Majesty!' Then the Queen turned to us and said 'God bless you all, my good people!' Then we cried again 'God bless your Majesty! God bless your Majesty!' Then the Queen said again to us, 'You may well have a greater prince, but you shall never have a more loving prince.' And so looking one upon another a while the Queen departed. This wrought such an impression on us, for shows and pageantry are ever best seen by torchlight, that all the way long we did nothing but talk what an admirable Queen she was, and how we would adventure our lives to do her service." But now, as Elizabeth passed along in her progresses, the people whose applause she courted remained cold and silent. The temper of the age in fact was changing, and isolating her as it changed. Her own England, the England which had grown up around her,

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death.

serious, moral, prosaic, shrank coldly from this brilliant, fanciful, unscrupulous, child of earth and the Renascence.

But if ministers and courtiers were counting on her death, Elizabeth had no mind to die. She had enjoyed life as the men of her day enjoyed it, and now that they were gone she clung to it with a fierce tenacity. She hunted, she danced, she jested with her young favourites, she coquetted and scolded and frolicked at sixty-seven as she had done at thirty. "The Queen," wrote a courtier a few months before her death, "was never so gallant these many years nor so set upon jollity." She persisted, in spite of opposition, in her gorgeous progresses from country-house to country-house. She clung to business as of old, and rated in her usual fashion "one who minded not to giving up some matter of account." But death crept on. Her face became haggard, and her frame shrank almost to a skeleton. At last her taste for finery disappeared, and she refused to change her dresses for a week together. A strange melancholy settled down on her. "She held in her hand," says one who saw her in her last days, "a golden cup, which she often put to her lips: but in truth her heart seemed too full to need more filling." Gradually her mind gave way. She lost her memory, the violence of her temper became unbearable, her very courage seemed to forsake her. She called for a sword to lie constantly beside her and thrust it from time to time through the arras, as if she heard murderers stirring there. Food and rest became alike distasteful. She sate day and night propped up with pillows on a stool, her finger on her lip, her eyes fixed on the floor, without a word. If she once broke the silence, it was with a flash of her old queenliness. When Robert Cecil declared that she "must" go to bed the word roused her like a trumpet. "Must!" she exclaimed; "is *must* a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man! thy father, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word." Then, as her anger spent itself, she sank into her old dejection. "Thou art so

CHAP. VII.
The
England of
Shakspeare.

1593-
1603.

presumptuous," she said, "because thou knowest I shall die." She rallied once more when the ministers beside her bed named Lord Beauchamp, the heir to the Suffolk claim, as a possible successor. "I will have no rogue's son," she cried hoarsely, "in my seat." But she gave no sign, save a motion of the head, at the mention of the King of Scots. She was in fact fast becoming insensible; and early the next morning, on the twenty-fourth of March, 1603, the life of Elizabeth, a life so great, so strange and lonely in its greatness, ebbed quietly away.

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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

VOL III



HISTORY
OF
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE.

BY
JOHN RICHARD GREEN, M.A.,
HONORARY FELLOW OF JESUS' COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOLUME III.

Puritan England. 1603-1660.
The Revolution. 1660-1688.

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¹ *By permission of Mr. Markham.*

BOOK VII.

PURITAN ENGLAND.

1603—1660.

AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VII.

1603—1660.

For the reign of James the First we have Camden's "Annals" of that king, Goodman's "Court of King James I.," Weldon's "Secret History of the Court of James I.," Roger Coke's "Detection," the correspondence in the "Cabala," the letters published under the title of "The Court and Times of James I.," the documents in Winwood's "Memorials of State," and the reported proceedings of the last two Parliaments. The Camden Society has published the correspondence of James with Cecil, and Walter Yonge's "Diary." The letters and works of Bacon, now fully edited by Mr. Spedding, are necessary for any true understanding of the period. Hacket's "Life of Williams" and Harrington's "Nugæ Antiquæ" throw valuable side-light on the politics of the time. But the Stuart system, both at home and abroad, can only fairly be read by the light of the state-papers of this and the following reign, calendars of which are now being published by the Master of the Rolls. It is his employment of these as well as his own fairness and good sense which gives value to the series of works which Mr. Gardiner has devoted to this period; his "History of England from the Accession of James the First," his "History of the Spanish Marriages," "England under the Duke of Buckingham," and "The Personal Government of Charles the First." The series has as yet been carried to 1637. To Mr. Gardiner also we owe the publication, through the Camden Society, of reports of some of the earlier Stuart Parliaments. Ranke's "History of England during the Seventeenth Century" has the same documentary value as embodying the substance of state-papers in both English and foreign archives, which throw great light on the foreign politics of the Stuart kings. It covers the whole period of Stuart rule. With the reign of Charles the First our historical materials increase. For Laud we have his remarkable "Diary;" for Strafford the "Strafford Letters." Hallam has justly characterized Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion" as belonging "rather to the class of memoirs" than of histories; and the rigorous analysis of it by Ranke shows the very different value of its various parts. Though the work will always retain a literary interest from its nobleness of style and the grand series of character-portraits which it embodies, the worth of its

account of all that preceded the war is almost destroyed by the contrast between its author's conduct at the time and his later description of the Parliament's proceedings, as well as by the deliberate and malignant falsehood with which he has perverted the whole action of his parliamentary opponents. With the outbreak of the war he becomes of greater value, and he gives a good account of the Cornish rising; but from the close of the first struggle his work becomes tedious and unimportant. May's "History of the Long Parliament" is fairly accurate and impartial; but the basis of any real account of it must be found in its own proceedings as they have been preserved in the notes of Sir Ralph Verney and Sir Simonds D'Ewes. The last remain unpublished; but Mr. Forster has drawn much from them in his two works, "The Grand Remonstrance" and "The Arrest of the Five Members." The collections of state-papers by Rushworth and Nalson are indispensable for this period. It is illustrated by a series of memoirs, of very different degrees of value, such as those of Whitelock, Ludlow, Sir Philip Warwick, Holles, and Major Hutchinson, as well as by works like Mrs. Hutchinson's memoir of her husband, Baxter's "Autobiography," or Sir Thomas Herbert's memoirs of Charles during his last two years. The Diary of Nehemiah Wallington gives us the common life of puritanism during this troubled time. For Cromwell the primary authority is Mr. Carlyle's "Life and Letters of Cromwell," an invaluable store of documents, edited with the care of an antiquarian and the genius of a poet. Fairfax may be studied in the "Fairfax Correspondence," and in the documents embodied in Mr. Clements Markham's life of him. Sprigge's "Anglia Rediviva" gives an account of the New Model and its doings. Thurlow's State Papers furnish an immense mass of documents for the period of the Protectorate; and Burton's "Diary" gives an account of the proceedings in the Protector's second Parliament. For Irish affairs we have a vast store of materials in the Ormond papers and letters collected by Carte; for Scotland we have "Baillie's Letters," Burnet's "Lives of the Hamiltons," and Sir James Turner's "Memoir of the Scotch Invasion." Among the general accounts of this reign we may name Disraeli's "Commentaries of the Reign of Charles I." as prominent on one side, Brodie's "History of the British Empire" and Godwin's "History of the Commonwealth" on the other. Guizot in his three works on "Charles I. and the Revolution," "Cromwell and the Protectorate," and "Richard Cromwell and the Restoration," is accurate and impartial; and the documents he has added are valuable for the foreign history of the time. A good deal of information may be found in Forster's "Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth," and Sandford's "Illustrations of the Great Rebellion."

CHAPTER I.

ENGLAND AND PURITANISM.

1603—1660.

THE death of Elizabeth is one of the turning-points of English history. The age of the Renascence and of the New Monarchy passed away with the Queen. The whole face of the realm had been silently changing during the later years of her reign. The dangers which had hitherto threatened our national existence and our national unity had alike disappeared. The kingdom which had been saved from ruin but fifty years before by the jealousies of its neighbours now stood in the fore-front of European powers. France clung to its friendship. Spain trembled beneath its blows. The Papacy had sullenly withdrawn from a fruitless strife with the heretic island. The last of the Queen's labours had laid Ireland at her feet, and her death knit Scotland to its ancient enemy by the tie of a common king. Within England itself the change was as great. Religious severance, the most terrible of national dangers, had been averted by the patience and the ruthlessness of the Crown. The Catholics were weak and held pitilessly down. The Protestant sectaries were hunted as pitilessly from the realm. The ecclesiastical compromise of the Tudors had at last won the adhesion of the country at large. Nor was the social change less remarkable. The natural growth of wealth and a patient good government had gradually put an end to all social anarchy. The dread of feudal revolt

*England
at the
death of
Elizabeth.*

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

had passed for ever away. The fall of the Northern Earls, of Norfolk, and of Essex, had broken the last strength of the older houses. The baronage had finally made way for a modern nobility, but this nobility, sprung as it was from the court of the Tudors, and dependent for its existence on the favour of the Crown, had none of that traditional hold on the people at large which made the feudal lords so formidable a danger to public order.

*Growth of
social
wealth.*

If the older claims of freedom had been waived in presence of the dangers which so long beset even national existence, the disappearance of these dangers brought naturally with it a revival of the craving for liberty and self-government. And once awakened such a craving found a solid backing in the material progress of the time, in the up-growth of new social classes, in the intellectual development of the people, and in the new boldness and vigour of the national temper. The long outer peace, the tranquillity of the realm, the lightness of taxation till the outbreak of war with Spain, had spread prosperity throughout the land. Even the war failed to hinder the enrichment of the trading classes. The Netherlands were the centre of European trade, and of all European countries England had for more than half-a-century been making the greatest advance in its trade with the Netherlands. As early as in the eight years which preceded Elizabeth's accession and the eight years that followed it, while the trade of Spain with the Low Countries had doubled, and that of France and Germany with them had grown three-fold, the trade between England and Antwerp had increased twenty-fold. The increase remained at least as great through the forty years that followed, and the erection of stately houses, marriages with noble families, and the purchase of great estates, showed the rapid growth of the merchant class in wealth and social importance. London above all was profiting by the general advance. The rapidity of its growth awoke the jealousy of the royal Council. One London merchant, Thomas Sutton, founded the great

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and Puri-
tanism.

hospital and school of the Charter House. Another, Hugh Myddelton, brought the New River from its springs at Chadwell and Amwell to supply London with pure water. Ere many years had gone the wealth of the great capital was to tell on the whole course of English history. Nor was the merchant class alone in this elevation. If the greater nobles no longer swayed the State, the spoil of the Church lands, and the general growth of national wealth, were raising the lesser landowners into a new social power. An influence which was to play a growing part in our history, the influence of the gentry, of the squires—as they were soon to be called—told more and more on English politics. In all but name indeed the leaders of this class were the equals of the peers whom they superseded. Men like the Wentworths in the north, or the Hampdens in the south, boasted as long a rent-roll and wielded as great an influence as many of the older nobles. The attitude of the Lower House towards the Higher throughout the Stewart Parliaments sprang mainly from the consciousness of the Commons that in wealth as well as in political consequence the merchants and country gentlemen who formed the bulk of their members stood far above the mass of the peers.

While a new social fabric was thus growing up on the wreck of feudal England, new influences were telling on its development. The immense advance of the people as a whole in knowledge and intelligence throughout the reign of Elizabeth was in itself a revolution. The hold of tradition, the unquestioning awe which formed the main strength of the Tudor throne, had been sapped and weakened by the intellectual activity of the Renaissance, by its endless questionings, its historic research, its philosophic scepticism. Writers and statesmen were alike discussing the claims of government and the wisest and most lasting forms of rule, travellers turned aside from the frescoes of Giorgione to study the aristocratic polity of Venice, and Jesuits borrowed from the schoolmen of the

*Growth of
national
spirit.*

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

middle ages a doctrine of popular rights which still forms the theory of modern democracy. On the other hand the nation was learning to rely on itself, to believe in its own strength and vigour, to crave for a share in the guidance of its own life. His conflict with the two great spiritual and temporal powers of Christendom, his strife at once with the Papacy and the House of Austria, had roused in every Englishman a sense of supreme manhood, which told, however slowly, on his attitude towards the Crown. The seaman whose tiny bark had dared the storms of far-off seas, the young squire who crossed the Channel to flesh his maiden sword at Ivry or Ostend, brought back with them to English soil the daring temper, the sense of inexhaustible resources, which had borne them on through storm and battle-field. The nation which gave itself to the rule of the Stewarts was another nation from the panic-struck people that gave itself in the crash of social and religious order to the guidance of the Tudors. It was plain that a new age of our history must open when the lofty patriotism, the dauntless energy, the overpowering sense of effort and triumph, which rose into their full grandeur through the war with Spain, turned from the strife with Philip to seek a new sphere of activity at home.

*The spirit
of religion.*

What had hindered this force from telling as yet fully on national affairs was the breadth and largeness which characterized the temper of the Renaissance. Through the past half-century the aims of Englishmen had been drawn far over the narrow bounds of England itself to every land and every sea; while their mental activity spent itself as freely on poetry and science as on religion and politics. But at the moment which we have reached the whole of this energy was seized upon and concentrated by a single force. For a hundred years past men had been living in the midst of a spiritual revolution. Not only the world about them but the world of thought and feeling within every breast had been utterly transformed. The work of

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

the sixteenth century had wrecked that tradition of religion, of knowledge, of political and social order, which had been accepted without question by the Middle Ages. The sudden freedom of the mind from these older bonds brought a consciousness of power such as had never been felt before; and the restless energy, the universal activity of the Renaissance were but outer expressions of the pride, the joy, the amazing self-confidence, with which man welcomed this revelation of the energies which had lain slumbering within him. But his pride and self-reliance were soon dashed by a feeling of dread. With the deepening sense of human individuality came a deepening conviction of the boundless capacities of the human soul. Not as a theological dogma, but as a human fact man knew himself to be an all but infinite power, whether for good or for ill. The drama towered into sublimity as it painted the strife of mighty forces within the breasts of Othello or Macbeth. Poets passed into metaphysicians as they strove to unravel the workings of conscience within the soul. From that hour one dominant influence told on human action: and all the various energies that had been called into life by the age that was passing away were seized, concentrated, and steadied to a definite aim by the spirit of religion.

The whole temper of the nation felt the change. "Theology rules there," said Grotius of England only two years after Elizabeth's death; and when Casaubon was invited by her successor to his court he found both king and people indifferent to pure letters. "There is a great abundance of theologians in England;" he says, "all point their studies in that direction." Even a country gentleman, like Colonel Hutchinson, felt the theological impulse. "As soon as he had improved his natural understanding with the acquisition of learning, the first studies he exercised himself in were the principles of religion." It was natural that literature should reflect the tendency of the time; and the dumpy little quartos of controversy and

The Bible.

CHAP. I.
England
and Puri-
tanism.

piety which still crowd our older libraries drove before them the classical translations and Italian novelettes of the age of the Renaissance. But their influence was small beside that of the Bible. The popularity of the Bible had been growing fast from the day when Bishop Bonner set up the first six copies in St. Paul's. Even then, we are told, "many well-disposed people used much to resort to the hearing thereof, especially when they could get any that had an audible voice to read to them." . . . "One John Porter used sometimes to be occupied in that goodly exercise, to the edifying of himself as well as others. This Porter was a fresh young man and of a big stature; and great multitudes would resort thither to hear him, because he could read well and had an audible voice." But the "goodly exercise" of readers such as Porter was soon superseded by the continued recitation of both Old Testament and New in the public services of the Church; while the small Geneva Bibles carried the Scripture into every home, and wove it into the life of every English family.

*Its
literary
influence.*

Religion indeed was only one of the causes for this sudden popularity of the Bible. The book was equally important in its bearing on the intellectual development of the people. All the prose literature of England, save the forgotten tracts of Wyclif, has grown up since the translation of the Scriptures by Tyndall and Coverdale. So far as the nation at large was concerned, no history, no romance, hardly any poetry save the little-known verse of Chaucer, existed in the English tongue when the Bible was ordered to be set up in churches. Sunday after Sunday, day after day, the crowds that gathered round the Bible in the nave of St. Paul's, or the family group that hung on its words in the devotional exercises at home, were leavened with a new literature. Legend and annal, war song and psalm, State-roll and biography, the mighty voices of prophets, the parables of Evangelists, stories of mission journeys, of perils by the sea and among the heathen, philosophic arguments, apocalyptic visions, all were

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

flung broadcast over minds unoccupied for the most part by any rival learning. The disclosure of the stores of Greek literature had wrought the revolution of the Renaissance. The disclosure of the older mass of Hebrew literature wrought the revolution of the Reformation. But the one revolution was far deeper and wider in its effects than the other. No version could transfer to another tongue the peculiar charm of language which gave their value to the authors of Greece and Rome. Classical letters therefore remained in the possession of the learned, that is, of the few; and among these, with the exception of Colet and More, or of the pedants who revived a Pagan worship in the gardens of the Florentine Academy, their direct influence was purely intellectual. But the language of the Hebrew, the idiom of the Hellenistic Greek, lent themselves with a curious felicity to the purposes of translation. As a mere literary monument the English version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it from the instant of its appearance the standard of our language.

For the moment however its literary effect was less. *Its social influence.* The power of the book over the mass of Englishmen showed itself in a thousand superficial ways, and in none more conspicuously than in the influence it exerted on ordinary speech. It formed, we must repeat, the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen; and when we recall the number of common phrases which we owe to great authors, the bits of Shakspeare, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray, which unconsciously interweave themselves in our ordinary talk, we shall better understand the strange mosaic of Biblical words and phrases which coloured English talk two hundred years ago. The mass of picturesque allusion and illustration which we borrow from a thousand books, our fathers were forced to borrow from one; and the borrowing was the easier and the more natural that the range of the Hebrew literature fitted it

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

for the expression of every phase of feeling. When Spenser poured forth his warmest love-notes in the "Epithalamion," he adopted the very words of the Psalmist, as he bade the gates open for the entrance of his bride. When Cromwell saw the mists break over the hills of Dunbar, he hailed the sun burst with the cry of David: "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered. Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away!" Even to common minds this familiarity with grand poetic imagery in prophet and apocalypse gave a loftiness and ardour of expression that with all its tendency to exaggeration and bombast we may prefer to the slipshod vulgarisms of to-day.

*Its
religious
influence.*

But far greater than its effect on literature or social phrase was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people at large. The Bible was as yet the one book which was familiar to every Englishman; and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened to their force and beauty, kindled a startling enthusiasm. The whole moral effect which is produced now-a-days by the religious newspaper, the tract, the essay, the missionary report, the sermon, was then produced by the Bible alone; and its effect in this way, however dispassionately we examine it, was simply amazing. The whole nation became a church. The problems of life and death, whose questionings found no answer in the higher minds of Shakspeare's day, pressed for an answer not only from noble and scholar but from farmer and shopkeeper in the age that followed him. The answer they found was almost of necessity a Calvinistic answer. Unlike as the spirit of Calvinism seemed to the spirit of the Renaissance, both found a point of union in their exaltation of the individual man. The mighty strife of good and evil within the soul itself which had overawed the imagination of dramatist and poet became the one spiritual conception in the mind of the Puritan. The Calvinist looked on churches and communions as convenient groupings of pious Christians; it might be as even

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

indispensable parts of a Christian order. But religion in its deepest and innermost sense had to do not with churches but with the individual soul. It was each Christian man who held in his power the issues of life and death. It was in each Christian conscience that the strife was waged between Heaven and Hell. Not as one of a body, but as a single soul, could each Christian claim his part in the mystery of redemption. In the outer world of worship and discipline the Calvinist might call himself one of many brethren, but at every moment of his inner existence, in the hour of temptation and of struggle, in his dark and troubled wrestling with sin, in the glory of conversion, in the peace of acceptance with God, he stood utterly alone. With such a conception of human life Puritanism offered the natural form for English religion at a time when the feeling with which religion could most easily ally itself was the sense of individuality. The 'prentice who sate awed in the pit of the theatre as the storm in the mind of Lear outdid the storm among the elements passed easily into the Calvinist who saw himself day by day the theatre of a yet mightier struggle between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, and his soul the prize of an eternal conflict between Heaven and Hell.

It was thus by its own natural developement that the temper of Englishmen became above all religious, and that their religion took in most cases the form of Calvinism. But the rapid spread of Calvinism was aided by outer causes as well as inner ones. The reign of Elizabeth had been a long struggle for national existence. When Shakspeare first trod the streets of London it was a question whether England should still remain England or whether it should sink into a vassal of Spain. In that long contest the creed which Henry and Elizabeth had constructed, the strange compromise of old tradition with new convictions which the country was gradually shaping into a new religion for itself, had done much for England's victory.

*Growth of
Calvinism.*

CHAP. I.
England
and Puri-
tanism.

It had held England together as a people. It had hindered any irreparable severance of the nation into warring churches. But it had done this unobserved. To the bulk of men the victory seemed wholly due to the energy and devotion of Calvinism. Rome had placed herself in the forefront of England's enemies, and it was the Calvinistic Puritan who was the irreconcilable foe of Rome. It was the Puritan who went forth to fight the Spaniard in France or in the Netherlands. It was the Puritan who broke into the Spanish Main, and who singed Philip's beard at Cadiz. It was the Puritan whose assiduous preachings and catechizings had slowly won the mass of the English people to any real acceptance of Protestantism. And as the war drifted on, as the hatred of Spain and resentment at the Papacy grew keener and fiercer, as patriotism became more identified with Protestantism, and Protestantism more identified with hatred of Rome, the side of English religion which lay furthest from all contact with the tradition of the past grew more and more popular among Englishmen.

*Puritanism
and
the people.*

To Elizabeth, whether on religious or political grounds, Calvinism was the most hateful of her foes. But it was in vain that she strove by a rigorous discipline to check its advance. Her discipline could only tell on the clergy, and the movement was far more a lay than a clerical one. Whether she would or no, in fact, the Queen's policy favoured the Puritan cause. It was impossible to befriend Calvinism abroad without furthering Calvinism at home. The soldiers and adventurers who flocked from England to fight in the Huguenot camps came back steeped in the Huguenot theology. The exiles who fled to England from France and from the Netherlands spread their narrower type of religion through the towns where they found a refuge. As the strife with Rome grew hotter the government was forced to fill parliament and the magistracy with men whose zealous Protestantism secured their fidelity in the case of a Catholic rising. But a zealous

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

Protestant was almost inevitably a Calvinist; and to place the administration of the country in Calvinist hands was to give an impulse to Puritanism. How utterly Elizabeth failed was seen at the beginning of her successor's reign. The bulk of the country gentlemen, the bulk of the wealthier traders, had by that time become Puritans. In the first Parliament of James the House of Commons refused for the first time to transact business on a Sunday. His second Parliament chose to receive the communion at St. Margaret's Church instead of Westminster Abbey "for fear of copes and wafer-cakes."

The same difficulty met Elizabeth in her efforts to check *Puritanism in the Church.* the growth of Puritanism in the Church itself. At the very outset of her reign the need of replacing the Marian bishops by staunch Protestants forced her to fill the English sees with men whose creed was in almost every case Calvinistic. The bulk of the lower clergy indeed were left without change; but as the older parsons died out their places were mostly filled by Puritan successors. The Universities furnished the new clergy, and at the close of Elizabeth's reign the tone of the Universities was hotly Puritan. Even the outer uniformity on which the Queen set her heart took a Puritan form. The use of the Prayer-book indeed was enforced; but the aspect of English churches and of English worship tended more and more to the model of Geneva. The need of more light to follow the service in the new Prayer-books served as a pretext for the removal of stained glass from the church windows. The Communion table stood almost everywhere in the midst of the church. If the surplice was generally worn during the service, the preacher often mounted the pulpit in a Geneva gown. We see the progress of this change in the very chapel of the Primates themselves. The chapel of Lambeth House was one of the most conspicuous among the ecclesiastical buildings of the time; it was a place "whither many of the nobility, judges, clergy, and persons of all sorts, as well strangers as natives, resorted."

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England
and Puri-
tanism.

But all pomp of worship gradually passed away from it. Under Cranmer the stained glass was dashed from its windows. In Elizabeth's time the communion table was moved into the middle of the chapel, and the credence table destroyed. Under James Archbishop Abbott put the finishing stroke on all attempts at a high ceremonial. The cope was no longer used as a special vestment in the communion. The Primate and his chaplains forbore to bow at the name of Christ. The organ and choir were alike abolished, and the service reduced to a simplicity which would have satisfied Calvin.

*Puritanism
and
politics.*

Foiled as it was, the effort of Elizabeth to check the spread of Puritanism was no mere freak of religious bigotry. It sprang from a clear realization of the impossibility of harmonizing the new temper of the nation with the system of personal government which had done its work under the Tudors. With the republican and anti-monarchical theories indeed that Calvinism had begotten elsewhere, English Calvinism showed as yet no sort of sympathy. The theories of resistance, of a people's right to judge and depose its rulers, which had been heard in the heat of the Marian persecution, had long sunk into silence. The loyalty of the Puritan gentleman was as fervent as that of his fellows. But with the belief of the Calvinist went necessarily a new and higher sense of political order. The old conception of personal rule, the dependence of a nation on the arbitrary will of its ruler, was jarring everywhere more and more with the religious as well as the philosophic impulses of the time. Men of the most different tendencies were reaching forward to the same conception of law. Bacon sought for universal laws in material nature. Hooker asserted the rule of law over the spiritual world. It was in the same way that the Puritan sought for a divine law by which the temporal kingdoms around him might be raised into a kingdom of Christ. The diligence with which he searched the Scriptures sprang from his earnestness to discover a

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Divine Will which in all things, great or small, he might implicitly obey. But this implicit obedience was reserved for the Divine Will alone; for human ordinances derived their strength only from their correspondence with the revealed law of God. The Puritan was bound by his religion to examine every claim made on his civil and spiritual obedience by the powers that be; and to own or reject the claim, as it accorded with the higher duty which he owed to God. "In matters of faith," a Puritan wife tells us of her husband, "his reason always submitted to the Word of God; but in all other things the greatest names in the world would not lead him without reason."

It was plain that an impassable gulf parted such a temper as this from the temper of unquestioning devotion to the Crown which the Tudors termed loyalty; for it was a temper not only legal, but even pedantic in its legality, intolerant from its very sense of a moral order and law of the lawlessness and disorder of a personal tyranny, a temper of criticism, of judgement, and, if need be, of stubborn and unconquerable resistance. The temper of the Puritan indeed was no temper of mere revolt. His resistance, if he was forced to resist, would spring not from any disdain of kingly authority, but from his devotion to an authority higher and more sacred than that of kings. He had as firm a faith as the nation at large in the divine right of the sovereign, in the sacred character of the throne. It was in fact just because his ruler's authority had a divine origin that he obeyed him. But the nation about the throne seemed to the Puritan not less divinely ordered a thing than the throne itself; it was the voice of God, inspiring and directing, which spoke through its history and its laws; it was God that guided to wisdom the hearts of Englishmen in Parliament assembled as He guided to wisdom the hearts of kings. Never was the respect for positive law so profound; never was the reverence for Parliaments so great as at the death of Elizabeth. There was none of the modern longing for a king that reigned

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without governing; no conscious desire shows itself anywhere to meddle with the actual exercise of the royal administration. But the Puritan could only conceive of the kingly power as of a power based upon constitutional tradition, controlled by constitutional law, and acting in willing harmony with that body of constitutional counsellors in the two Houses, who represented the wisdom and the will of the realm.

*Puritanism
and
society.*

It was in the creation of such a temper as this that Puritanism gave its noblest gift to English politics. It gave a gift hardly less noble to society at large in its conception of social equality. Their common calling, their common brotherhood in Christ, annihilated in the mind of the Puritans that overpowering sense of social distinctions which characterized the age of Elizabeth. There was no open break with social traditions; no open revolt against the social subordination of class to class. But within these forms of the older world beat for the first time the spirit which was to characterize the new. The meanest peasant felt himself ennobled as a child of God. The proudest noble recognized a spiritual equality in the poorest "saint." The great social revolution of the Civil Wars and the Protectorate was already felt in the demeanour of English gentlemen. "He had a loving and sweet courtesy to the poorest," we are told of one of them, "and would often employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and poorest labourers." "He never disdained the meanest nor flattered the greatest." But it was felt even more in the new dignity and self-respect with which the consciousness of their "calling" invested the classes beneath the rank of the gentry. Take such a portrait as that which a turner in Eastcheap, Nehemiah Wallington, has left us of a London housewife, his mother. "She was very loving," he says, "and obedient to her parents, loving and kind to her husband, very tender-hearted to her children, loving all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane. She was a pattern of sobriety unto many, very

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seldom was seen abroad except at church; when others recreated themselves at holidays and other times, she would take her needle-work and say 'here is my recreation.' . . . God had given her a pregnant wit and an excellent memory. She was very ripe and perfect in all stories of the Bible, likewise in all the stories of the Martyrs, and could readily turn to them; she was also perfect and well seen in the English Chronicles, and in the descents of the Kings of England. She lived in holy wedlock with her husband twenty years, wanting but four days."

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human
conduct.*

Where the new conception of life told even more powerfully than on politics or society was in its bearing on the personal temper and conduct of men. There was a sudden loss of the passion, the caprice, the subtle and tender play of feeling, the breadth of sympathy, the quick pulse of delight, which had marked the age of Elizabeth; but on the other hand life gained in moral grandeur, in a sense of the dignity of manhood, in orderliness and equable force. The larger geniality of the age that had passed away was replaced by an intense tenderness within the narrower circle of the home. Home, as we conceive it now, was the creation of the Puritan. Wife and child rose from mere dependants on the will of husband or father, as husband and father saw in them saints like himself, souls hallowed by the touch of a divine Spirit and called with a divine calling like his own. The sense of spiritual fellowship gave a new tenderness and refinement to the common family affections. "He was as kind a father," says a Puritan wife of her husband, "as dear a brother, as good a master, as faithful a friend as the world had." The wilful and lawless passion of the Renaissance made way for a manly purity. "Neither in youth nor riper years could the most fair or enticing woman draw him into unnecessary familiarity or dalliance. Wise and virtuous women he loved, and delighted in all pure and holy and unblameable conversation with them, but so as

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never to excite scandal or temptation. Scurrilous discourse even among men he abhorred; and though he sometimes took pleasure in wit and mirth, yet that which was mixed with impurity he never could endure." A higher conception of duty coloured men's daily actions. To the Puritan the wilfulness of life, in which the men of the Renaissance had revelled, seemed unworthy of life's character and end. His aim was to attain self-command, to be master of himself, of his thought and speech and acts. A certain gravity and reflectiveness gave its tone to the lightest details of his converse with the world about him. His temper, quick as it might naturally be, was kept under strict control. In his discourse he was on his guard against talkativeness and frivolity, striving to be deliberate in speech, and "ranking the words beforehand." His life was orderly and methodical, sparing of diet and self-indulgence; he rose early; "he never was at any time idle, and hated to see any one else so." The new sobriety and self-restraint showed itself in a change of dress. The gorgeous colours and jewels of the Renaissance disappeared. The Puritan squire "left off very early the wearing of anything that was costly, yet in his plainest negligent habit appeared very much a gentleman."

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culture.

The loss of colour and variety in costume reflected no doubt a certain loss of colour and variety in life itself. But as yet Puritanism was free from any break with the harmless gaieties of the world about it. The lighter and more elegant sides of the Elizabethan culture harmonized well enough with the temper of the Calvinist gentleman. The figure of such a Puritan as Colonel Hutchinson stands out from his wife's canvass with the grace and tenderness of a portrait by Vandyck. She dwells on the personal beauty which distinguished his youth, on "his teeth even and white as the purest ivory," "his hair of brown, very thick-set in his youth, softer than the finest silk, curling with loose great rings at the ends." Serious as was his temper in graver matters, the young squire of Owthorpe was fond

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of hawking, and piqued himself on his skill in dancing and fence. His artistic taste showed itself in a critical love of "paintings, sculpture, and all liberal arts," as well as in the pleasure he took in his gardens, "in the improvement of his grounds, in planting groves and walks and forest-trees." If he was "diligent in his examination of the Scriptures," "he had a great love for music and often diverted himself with a viol, on which he played masterly."

The strength however of the religious movement lay rather among the middle and professional classes than among the gentry; and it is in a Puritan of this class that we find the fullest and noblest expression of the new influence which was leavening the temper of the time. John Milton is not only the highest but the completest type of Puritanism. His life is absolutely contemporaneous with his cause. He was born when it began to exercise a direct influence over English politics and English religion; he died when its effort to mould them into its own shape was over, and when it had again sunk into one of many influences to which we owe our English character. His earlier verse, the pamphlets of his riper years, the epics of his age, mark with a singular precision the three great stages in its history. His youth shows us how much of the gaiety, the poetic ease, the intellectual culture of the Renaissance, lingered in a Puritan home. Scrivener and "precisian" as his father was, he was a skilled musician, and the boy inherited his father's skill on lute and organ. One of the finest outbursts in the scheme of education which he put forth at a later time is a passage in which he vindicates the province of music as an agent in moral training. His home, his tutor, his school were all rigidly Puritan; but there was nothing narrow or illiberal in his early training. "My father," he says, "destined me while yet a little boy to the study of humane letters; which I seized with such eagerness that from the twelfth year of my age I scarcely ever went from my lessons to bed before midnight." But

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to the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew he learned at school, the scrivener advised him to add Italian and French. Nor were English letters neglected. Spenser gave the earliest turn to the boy's poetic genius. In spite of the war between playwright and precisian, a Puritan youth could still in Milton's days avow his love of the stage, "if Jonson's learned sock be on, or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child, warble his native woodnotes wild," and gather from the "masques and antique pagantry" of the court-revel hints for his own "Comus" and "Arcades." Nor does any shadow of the coming struggle with the Church disturb the young scholar's reverie, as he wanders beneath "the high embowed roof, with antique pillars massy proof, and storied windows richly dight, casting a dim religious light," or as he hears "the pealing organ blow to the full-voiced choir below, in service high and anthem clear."

Milton's enjoyment of the gaiety of life stands in bright contrast with the gloom and sternness which strife and persecution fostered in Puritanism at a later time. In spite of a "certain reservedness of natural disposition," which shrank from "festivities and jests, in which I acknowledge my faculty to be very slight," the young singer could still enjoy the "jest and youthful jollity" of the world around him, its "quips and cranks and wanton wiles;" he could join the crew of Mirth, and look pleasantly on at the village fair, "where the jolly rebecks sound to many a youth and many a maid, dancing in the chequered shade." There was nothing ascetic in Milton's look, in his slender, vigorous frame, his face full of a delicate yet serious beauty, the rich brown hair which clustered over his brow; and the words we have quoted show his sensitive enjoyment of all that was beautiful. But his pleasures were "unreproved." From coarse or sensual self-indulgence the young Puritan turned with disgust: "A certain reservedness of nature, an honest haughtiness and self-esteem, kept me still above those low descents of

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mind." He drank in an ideal chivalry from Spenser, though his religion and purity disdained the outer pledge on which chivalry built up its fabric of honour. "Every free and gentle spirit," said Milton, "without that oath, ought to be born a knight." It was with this temper that he passed from his London school, St. Paul's, to Christ's College at Cambridge, and it was this temper that he preserved throughout his University career. He left Cambridge, as he said afterwards, "free from all reproach, and approved by all honest men," with a purpose of self-dedication "to that same lot, however mean or high, towards which time leads me and the will of heaven."

Even in the still calm beauty of a life such as this we catch the sterner tones of the Puritan temper. The very height of the Puritan's aim, the intensity of his moral concentration, brought with them a loss of the genial delight in all that was human which gave its charm to the age of Elizabeth. "If ever God instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the mind of any man," said the great Puritan poet, "he has instilled it into mine." "Love Virtue," closed his "Comus," "she alone is free!" But this passionate love of virtue and of moral beauty, if it gave strength to human conduct, narrowed human sympathy and human intelligence. Already in Milton we note "a certain reservedness of temper," a contempt for "the false estimates of the vulgar," a proud withdrawal from the meaner and coarser life around him. Great as was his love for Shakspeare, we can hardly fancy him delighting in Falstaff. In minds of a less cultured order, this moral tension ended, no doubt, in a hard unsocial sternness of life. The ordinary Puritan "loved all that were godly, much misliking the wicked and profane." His bond to other men was not the sense of a common manhood, but the recognition of a brotherhood among the elect. Without the pale of the saints lay a world which was hateful to them, because it was the enemy of their God. It is this utter isolation from the "ungodly" that explains the contrast which startles us between the

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inner tenderness of the Puritans and the ruthlessness of so many of their actions. Cromwell, whose son's death (in his own words) went to his heart "like a dagger, indeed it did!" and who rode away sad and wearied from the triumph of Marston Moor, burst into horse-play as he signed the death-warrant of the King.

A temper which had lost sympathy with the life of half the world around it could hardly sympathize with the whole of its own life. Humour, the faculty which above all corrects exaggeration and extravagance, died away before the new stress and strain of existence. The absolute devotion of the Puritan to a Supreme Will tended more and more to rob him of all sense of measure and proportion in common matters. Little things became great things in the glare of religious zeal; and the godly man learnt to shrink from a surplice, or a mince-pie at Christmas, as he shrank from impurity or a lie. Nor was this all. The self-restraint and sobriety which marked the Calvinist limited itself wholly to his outer life. In his inner soul sense, reason, judgement, were too often overborne by the terrible reality of invisible things. Our first glimpse of Oliver Cromwell is as a young country squire and farmer in the marsh-levels around Huntingdon and St. Ives, buried from time to time in a deep melancholy, and haunted by fancies of coming death. "I live in Meshac," he writes to a friend, "which they say signifies Prolonging; in Kedar, which signifies Darkness; yet the Lord forsaketh me not." The vivid sense of a Divine Purity close to such men made the life of common men seem sin. "You know what my manner of life has been," Cromwell adds. "Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light. I hated godliness." Yet his worst sin was probably nothing more than an enjoyment of the natural buoyancy of youth, and a want of the deeper earnestness which comes with riper years. In imaginative tempers, like that of Bunyan, the struggle took a more picturesque form. John Bunyan was the son of a poor tinker at Elstow in Bedfordshire, and even in

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childhood his fancy revelled in terrible visions of Heaven and Hell. "When I was but a child of nine or ten years old," he tells us, "these things did so distress my soul, that then in the midst of my merry sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain, companions, I was often much cast down and afflicted in my mind therewith; yet could I not let go my sins." The sins he could not let go were a love of hockey and of dancing on the village green; for the only real fault which his bitter self-accusation discloses, that of a habit of swearing, was put an end to at once and for ever by a rebuke from an old woman. His passion for bell-ringing clung to him even after he had broken from it as a "vain practice;" and he would go to the steeple-house and look on, till the thought that a bell might fall and crush him in his sins drove him panic-stricken from the door. A sermon against dancing and games drew him for a time from these indulgences; but the temptation again overmastered his resolve. "I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight. But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?' At this I was put in an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven; and was as if I had with the eyes of my understanding seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if He did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for those and other ungodly practices."

The vivid sense of a supernatural world which breathes through words such as these, the awe and terror with which it pressed upon the life of men, found their most terrible expression in the belief in witchcraft. The dread of Satanic intervention indeed was not peculiar to the

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Puritan. It had come down from the earliest ages of the Christian Church, and had been fanned into a new intensity at the close of the middle ages by the physical calamities and moral scepticism which threw their gloom over the world. Joan of Arc was a witch to every Englishman, and the wife of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester paced the streets of London, candle in hand, as a convicted sorceress. But it was not till the chaos and turmoil of the Reformation put its strain on the spiritual imagination of men that the belief in demoniacal possession deepened into a general panic. The panic was common to both Catholics and Protestants; it was in Catholic countries indeed that the persecution of supposed witches was carried on longest and most ruthlessly. Among Protestant countries England was the last to catch the general terror; and the Act of 1541, the first English statute passed against witchcraft, was far milder in tone than the laws of any other European country. Witchcraft itself, where no death could be proved to have followed from it, was visited only with pillory and imprisonment; where death had issued from it, the penalty was the gallows and not the stake. Even this statute was repealed in the following reign. But the fierce religious strife under Mary roused a darker fanaticism; and when Elizabeth mounted the throne preacher after preacher assured her that a multitude of witches filled the land. "Witches and sorcerers," cried Bishop Jewel, "within these few years are marvellously increased within your grace's realm. Your grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their colour fadeth, their flesh rotteth, their speech is benumbed, their senses are bereft!" Before remonstrances such as these the statute against witchcraft was again enacted; but though literature and the drama show the hold which a belief in satanic agency had gained on the popular fancy, the temper of the times was too bold and self-reliant, its intelligence too keen and restless, its tone too secular, to furnish that atmosphere of panic in which fanaticism is bred.

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It was not till the close of the Queen's reign, as hope darkened round Protestantism and the Puritan temper woke a fresh faith in the supernatural, that the belief in witchcraft and the persecution of the unhappy women who were held to be witches became a marked feature of the time. To men who looked on the world about them and the soul within them as battle-fields for a never-ceasing contest between God and the Devil, it was natural enough to ascribe every evil that happened to man, either in soul or body, to the invisible agency of the spirit of ill. A share of his supernatural energies was the bait by which he was held to lure the wicked to their own destruction; and women above all were believed to barter their souls for the possession of power which lifted them above the weakness of their sex. Sober men asserted that the beldame, whom boys hooted in the streets and who groped in the gutter for bread, could blast the corn with mildew and lame the oxen in the plough, that she could smite her persecutors with pains and sickness, that she could rouse storms in the sky and strew every shore with the wrecks of ships and the corpses of men, that as night gathered round she could mount her broomstick and sweep through the air to the witches' Sabbath, to yield herself in body and soul to the demons of ill. The nascent scepticism that startled at tales such as these was hushed before the witness of the Bible, for to question the existence of sorcerer or dæmoniac seemed questioning the veracity of the Scriptures themselves. Pity fell before the stern injunction "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live"; and the squire who would have shrunk from any conscious cruelty as from a blow looked on without ruth as the torturers ran needles into the witch's flesh, or swam her in the witch's pool, or hurried her to the witch's stake.

But the terror with which the Puritan viewed these proofs of a new energy in the powers of ill found a wider sphere of action as he saw their new activity and success in the religious and political world about him. At the

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opening of Elizabeth's reign every Protestant had looked forward to a world-wide triumph of the Gospel. If Italy and Spain clung blindly to the Papacy, elsewhere, alike on the Danube or the Rhine, on the Elbe or the Seine, the nations of Europe seemed to have risen in irreconcilable revolt against Rome. But the prospect of such a triumph had long since disappeared. At the crisis of the struggle a Catholic re-action had succeeded in holding Protestantism at bay, and after years of fierce combat Rome had begun definitely to win ground. The peaceful victories of the Jesuits were backed by the arms of Spain, and Europe was gradually regained till the policy of Philip the Second was able to aim its blows at the last strongholds of Calvinism in the west. Philip was undoubtedly worsted in the strife. England was saved by its defeat of the Armada. The United Provinces of the Netherlands rose into a great power as well through their own dogged heroism as through the genius of William the Silent. At a moment too when all hope seemed gone France was rescued from the grasp of the Catholic League by the unconquerable energy of Henry of Navarre. But even in its defeat Catholicism gained ground. England alone remained unaffected by its efforts. In the Low Countries the Reformation was finally driven from the Walloon Provinces, from Brabant, and from Flanders. In France Henry the Fourth found himself compelled to purchase Paris by a mass; and the conversion of the King was the beginning of a quiet breaking up of the Huguenot party. Nobles and scholars alike forsook the cause of heresy, and though Calvinism remained dominant south of the Loire, it lost all hope of winning France as a whole to its side.

Puritan
intolerance.

At Elizabeth's death therefore the temper of every earnest Protestant, in England as elsewhere, was that of a man who after cherishing the hope of a crowning victory is forced to look on at a crushing and irremediable defeat. The dream of a Reformation of the universal Church was

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utterly at an end. Though the fierce strife of religions seemed for a while to have died down, the borders of Protestantism were narrowing every day, nor was there a sign that the triumph of the Papacy was arrested. Even the older Lutheranism of Germany was threatened; and the minds of men were already presaging the struggle which was to end in the Thirty Years' War. Such a struggle could be no foreign strife to the Puritan. The war in the Palatinate kindled a fiercer flame in the English Parliament than all the aggressions of the monarchy; and Englishmen followed the campaigns of Gustavus with even keener interest than the trial of Hampden. We shall see how great a part this sympathy with outer Protestantism played in the earlier struggle between England and the Stuarts: but it played as great a part in determining the Puritan attitude towards religion at home. As hope after hope died into defeat and disaster the mood of the Puritan grew sterner and more intolerant. The system of compromise by which the Tudors had held England together became more and more distasteful to him. To one who looked on himself as a soldier of God and as a soldier who was fighting a losing battle, the struggle with the Papacy was no matter for compromise. It was a struggle between light and darkness, between life and death. No innovation in faith or worship was of small account if it tended in the direction of Rome. The peril in fact was too great to admit of tolerance or moderation. At a moment when all that he hated was gaining ground on all that he loved, the Puritan saw the one security for what he held to be truth in drawing a hard and fast line between that truth and what he held to be falsehood.

This dogged concentration of thought and feeling on a single issue told with a fatal effect on his theology. The spirit of the Renaissance had been driven for a while from the field of religion by the strife between Catholic and Protestant; and in the upgrowth of a more rigid system of dogma, whether on the one side or on the other, the

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work of More and Colet seemed to be undone. But no sooner had the strife lost its older intensity, no sooner had a new Christendom fairly emerged from the troubled waters, than the Renaissance again made its influence felt. Its voice was heard above all in Richard Hooker, a clergyman who had been Master of the Temple, but had been driven by his distaste for the controversies of its pulpit from London to a Wiltshire vicarage at Boscombe, which he exchanged at a later time for the parsonage of Bishopsbourne among the quiet meadows of Kent. During the later years of Elizabeth he built up in these still retreats the stately fabric of his "Ecclesiastical Polity." The largeness of temper which marked all the nobler minds of his day, the philosophic breadth which is seen as clearly in Shakspeare as in Bacon, was united in Hooker with a grandeur and stateliness of style which raised him to the highest rank among English prose writers. Divine as he was, his spirit and method were philosophical rather than theological. Against the ecclesiastical dogmatism of Presbyterian or Catholic he set the authority of reason. He abandoned the narrow ground of Scriptural argument to base his conclusions on the general principles of moral and political science, on the eternal obligations of natural law. The Puritan system rested on the assumption that an immutable rule for human action in all matters relating to religion, to worship, and to the discipline and constitution of the Church, was laid down, and only laid down, in the words of Scripture. Hooker urged that a divine order exists not in written revelation only, but in the moral relations, the historical developement, and the social and political institutions of men. He claimed for human reason the province of determining the laws of this order; of distinguishing between what is changeable and unchangeable in them, between what is eternal and what is temporary in the Bible itself. It was easy for him to push on to the field of ecclesiastical controversy where men like Cartwright were fighting the battle of Presby-

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terianism, to show that no form of Church government had ever been of indispensable obligation, and that ritual observances had in all ages been left to the discretion of churches and determined by the differences of times.

From the moment of its appearance the effect of the "Ecclesiastical Polity" was felt in the broader and more generous stamp which it impressed on the temper of the national Church. Hooker had in fact provided with a theory and placed on grounds of reason that policy of comprehension which had been forced on the Tudors by the need of holding England together, and from which the Church, as it now existed, had sprung. But the truth on which Hooker based his argument was of far higher value than his argument itself. The acknowledgement of a divine order in human history, of a divine law in human reason, harmonized with the noblest instincts of the Elizabethan age. Raleigh's effort to grasp as a whole the story of mankind, Bacon's effort to bring all outer nature to the test of human intelligence, were but the crowning manifestations of the two main impulses of their time, its rationalism and its humanity. Both found expression in the work of Hooker; and coloured through its results the after history of the English Church. The historical feeling showed itself in a longing to ally the religion of the present with the religion of the past, to find a unity of faith and practice with the Church of the Fathers, to claim part in that great heritage of Catholic tradition, both in faith and worship, which the Papacy so jealously claimed as its own. Such a longing seized as much on tender and poetic tempers like George Herbert's as on positive and prosaic tempers, such as that of Laud. The one started back from the bare, intense spiritualism of the Puritan to find nourishment for his devotion in the outer associations which the piety of ages had grouped around it, in holy places and holy things, in the stillness of church and altar, in the pathos and exultation of prayer and praise, in the awful mystery of sacraments. The

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narrow and external mood of the other, unable to find standing ground in the purely personal relation between man and God which formed the basis of Calvinism, fell back on the consciousness of a living Christendom, preserving through the ages a definite faith and worship, and which, torn and rent as it seemed, was soon to resume its ancient unity.

*The
Arminians.*

While the historical feeling which breathes in Hooker's work took form in the new passion for tradition and ceremonialism, the appeal which it addressed to human reason produced a school of philosophical thinkers whose timid upgrowth was almost lost in the clash of warring creeds about them, but who were destined—as the latitudinarians of later days—to make as deep an impression as their dogmatic rivals on the religious thought of their countrymen. As yet however this rationalizing movement hovered on the borders of the system of belief which it was so keenly to attack; it limited itself rather to the work of moderating and reconciling, to recognizing with Calixtus the pettiness of the points of difference which parted Christendom and the greatness of its points of agreement, or to revolting with Arminius from the more extreme tenets of Calvin and Calvin's followers and pleading like him for some cooperation on man's part with the work of grace. As yet Arminianism was little more than a reaction against a system that contradicted the obvious facts of life, a desire to bring theology into some sort of harmony with human experience; but it was soon to pass by a fatal necessity into a wider variance, and to gather round it into one mass of opposition every tendency of revolt which time was disclosing against the Calvinism which now reigned triumphant in Protestant theology.

*The
doctrinal
bigotry of
Puritanism.*

From the belief in humanity or in reason which gave strength to such a revolt the Puritan turned doggedly away. In the fierce white light of his idealism human effort seemed weakness, human virtue but sin, human reason but folly. Absorbed as he was in the thought of God, craving

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for nothing less than a divine righteousness, a divine wisdom, a divine strength, he grasped the written Bible as the law of God and concentrated every energy in the effort to obey it. The dogma of justification, the faith that without merit or act of man God would save and call to holiness his own elect, was the centre of his creed. And with such a creed he felt that the humanity of the Renaissance, the philosophy of the thinker, the comprehension of the statesman, were alike at war. A policy of comprehension seemed to him simply a policy of faithlessness to God. Ceremonies which in an hour of triumph he might have regarded as solaces to weak brethren, he looked on as acts of treason in this hour of defeat. Above all he would listen to no words of reconciliation with a religious system in which he saw nothing but a lie, nor to any pleas for concession in what he held to be truth. The craving of the Arminian for a more rational theology he met by a fiercer loyalty to the narrowest dogma. Archbishop Whitgift had striven to force on the Church of England a set of articles which embodied the tenets of an extreme Calvinism; and one of the wisest acts of Elizabeth had been to disallow them. But hateful as Whitgift on every other ground was to the Puritans, they never ceased to demand the adoption of his Lambeth Articles.

And as he would admit no toleration within the sphere of doctrine, so would the Puritan admit no toleration within the sphere of ecclesiastical order. That the Church of England should both in ceremonies and in teaching take a far more distinctively Protestant attitude than it had hitherto done, every Puritan was resolved. But there was as yet no general demand for any change in the form of its government, or of its relation to the State. Though the wish to draw nearer to the mass of the Reformed Churches won a certain amount of favour for the Presbyterian form of organization which they had adopted, as an obligatory system of Church discipline Presbyterianism had been embraced by but a few of the

*Its hatred
of
sectaries.*

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English clergy, and by hardly any of the English laity. Nor was there any tendency in the mass of the Puritans towards a breach in the system of religious conformity which Elizabeth had constructed. On the contrary, what they asked was for its more rigorous enforcement. That Catholics should be suffered under whatever pains and penalties to preserve their faith and worship in a Protestant Commonwealth was abhorrent to them. Nor was Puritan opinion more tolerant to the Protestant sectaries who were beginning to find the State Church too narrow for their enthusiasm. Elizabeth herself could not feel a bitterer abhorrence of the "Brownists" (as they were called from the name of their founder Robert Brown) who rejected the very notion of a national Church, and asserted the right of each congregation to perfect independence of faith and worship. To the zealot whose whole thought was of the fight with Rome, such an assertion seemed the claim of a right to mutiny in the camp, a right of breaking up Protestant England into a host of sects too feeble to hold Rome at bay. Cartwright himself denounced the wickedness of the Brownists; Parliament, Puritan as it was, passed in 1593 a statute against them; and there was a general assent to the stern measures of repression by which Brown himself was forced to fly to the Netherlands. Two of his fellow-congregationists were seized and put to death on charges of sedition and heresy. Of their followers many, as we learn from a petition in 1592, were driven into exile, "and the rest which remain in her Grace's land greatly distressed through imprisonment and other great troubles." The persecution in fact did its work. "As for those which we call Brownists," wrote Bacon, "being when they were at the most a very small number of very silly and base people, here and there in corners dispersed, they are now, thanks to God, by the good remedies that have been used, suppressed and worn out; so that there is scarce any news of them." The execution of three Nonconformists in the following year was in fact

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followed by the almost utter extermination of their body. But against this persecution no Puritan voice was raised.

All in fact that the bulk of the Puritans asked was a change in the outer ritual of worship which should correspond to the advance towards a more pronounced Protestantism that had been made by the nation at large during the years of Elizabeth's reign. Their demands were as of old for the disuse of "superstitious ceremonies." To modern eyes the points which they selected for change seem trivial enough. But they were in fact of large significance. To reject the sign of the Cross in baptism was to repudiate the whole world of ceremonies of which it was a survivor. The disuse of the surplice would have broken down the last outer difference which parted the minister from the congregation, and manifested to every eye the spiritual equality of layman and priest. Kneeling at the Communion might be a mere act of reverence, but formally to discontinue such an act was emphatically to assert a disbelief in the sacramental theories of Catholicism. During the later years of Elizabeth reverence for the Queen had hindered any serious pressure for changes to which she would never assent; but a general expectation prevailed that at her death some change would be made. Even among men of secular stamp there was a general conviction of the need of some concession to the religious sentiment of the nation. They had clung to the usages which the Puritans denounced so long as they were aids in hindering a religious severance throughout the land. But whatever value the retention of such ceremonies might have had in facilitating the quiet passage of the bulk of Englishmen from the old worship to the new had long since passed away. England as a whole was Protestant; and the Catholics who remained were not likely to be drawn to the national Church by trifles such as these. Instead of being the means of hindering religious division the usages had now become means of creating it. It was on this ground that statesmen who had little sympathy

CHAP. I. with the religious spirit about them pleaded for the
 ——— purchase of religious and national union by ecclesiastical
 England and Puri- reforms. "Why," asked Bacon, "should the civil state be
 ——— tanism. purged and restored by good and wholesome laws made
 every three years in Parliament assembled, devising reme-
 dies as fast as time breedeth mischief, and contrariwise
 the ecclesiastical state still continue upon the dregs of
 time, and receive no alteration these forty-five years or
 more?"

CHAPTER II.

THE KING OF SCOTS.

SUCH was the temper of England at the death of Elizabeth; and never had greater issues hung on the character of a ruler than hung on the character of her successor. Had he shared the sympathy with popular feeling which formed the strength of the Tudors, time might have brought peaceably about that readjustment of political forces which the growth of English energies had made a necessity. Had he possessed the genius of a great statesman, he might have distinguished in the mingled mass of impulses about him between the national and the sectarian, and have given scope to the nobleness of Puritanism while resolutely checking its bigotry. It was no common ill-fortune that set at such a crisis on the throne a ruler without genius as without sympathy, and that broke the natural progress of the people by a conflict between England and its kings.

Throughout the last days of Elizabeth most men had looked forward to a violent struggle for the crown. The more bigoted Catholics supported the pretensions of Isabella, the eldest daughter of Philip the Second of Spain. The house of Suffolk, which through the marriage of Lady Catharine Grey with Lord Hertford was now represented by their son, Lord Beauchamp, still clung to its parliamentary title under the will of Henry the Eighth. Even if the claim of the house of Stuart was admitted, there were some who held that the Scottish king, as an alien

*James
Stuart.*

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by birth, had no right of inheritance, and that the succession to the crown lay in the next Stuart heiress, Arabella Stuart, a granddaughter of Lady Lennox by her younger son, Darnley's brother. But claims such as these found no general support. By a strange good fortune every great party in the realm saw its hopes realized in King James. The mass of the Catholics, who had always been favourable to a Scottish succession, were persuaded that the son of Mary Stuart would at least find toleration for his mother's co-religionists; and as they watched the distaste for Presbyterian rule and the tendency to comprehension which James had already manifested, they listened credulously to his emissaries. On the other hand the Puritans saw in him the king of a Calvinistic people, bred in a Church which rejected the ceremonies that they detested and upheld the doctrines which they longed to render supreme, and who had till now, whatever his strife might have been with the claims of its ministers, shown no dissent from its creed or from the rites of its worship. Nor was he less acceptable to the more secular tempers who guided Elizabeth's counsels. The bulk of English statesmen saw too clearly the advantages of a union of the two kingdoms under a single head to doubt for a moment as to the succession of James. If Elizabeth had refused to allow his claim to be formally recognized by Parliament she had pledged herself to suffer no detriment to be done to it there; and in her later days Cecil had come forward to rescue the young King from his foolish intrigues with English parties and Catholic powers, and to assure him of support. No sooner in fact was the Queen dead than James Stuart was owned as King by the Council without a dissentient voice.

His youth.

To James himself the change was a startling one. He had been a King indeed from his cradle. But his kingdom was the smallest and meanest of European realms, and his actual power had been less than that of many an English peer. For years he had been the mere sport of warring

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nobles who governed in his name. Their rule was a sheer anarchy. For a short while after Mary's flight Murray showed the genius of a born master of men; but at the opening of 1570 his work was ended by the shot of a Hamilton. "What Bothwell-haugh has done," Mary wrote joyously from her English prison at the news, "has been done without order of mine: but I thank him all the more for it." The murder in fact plunged Scotland again into a chaos of civil war which, as the queen shrewdly foresaw, could only tend to the after-profit of the Crown. A year later the next regent, the child-king's grandfather, Lord Lennox, was slain in a fray at Stirling; and it was only when the regency passed into the strong hand of Morton at the close of 1572, and when England intervened in the cause of order, that the land won a short breathing-space. Edinburgh, the last fortress held in Mary's name, surrendered to a force sent by Elizabeth; its captain, Kirkcaldy of Grange, was hung for treason in the market-place; and the stern justice of Morton forced peace upon the warring lords. But hardly five years had passed when a union of his rivals and their adroit crowning of the boy-king put an end to Morton's regency and gave a fresh aim to the factions who were tearing Scotland to pieces. To get hold of the King's person, to wield in his name the royal power, became the end of their efforts. The boy was safe only at Stirling; and even at Stirling a fray at the gate all but transferred him from the Erskines to fresh hands. It was in vain that James sought security in a body-guard; or strove to baffle the nobles by recalling a cousin, Esme Stuart, from France, and giving him the control of affairs. A sudden flight back to Stirling only saved him from seizure at Doune; and a few months later, as James hunted at Ruthven, he found the hand of the Master of Glamis on his bridle-rein. "Better bairns greet than bearded men," was the gruff answer to his tears, as his favourite fled into exile and the boy-king saw himself again a tool in the hands of the lords.

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of Scots.**His
purpose.*

Such was the world in which James had grown to manhood; a world of brutal swordsmen, in whose hands the boy who shrank from the very sight of a sword seemed helpless. But if the young King had little physical courage, morally he proved fearless enough. He drew confidence in himself from a sense of his intellectual superiority to the men about him. From his earliest years indeed James showed a precocious cleverness; and as a child he startled grave councillors by his "discourse, walking up and down in the Lady Mar's hand, of knowledge and ignorance." It was his amazing self-reliance which enabled him to bear the strange loneliness of his life. He had nothing in common with the turbulent nobles whose wild cries he had heard from the walls of Stirling Castle, as they slew his grandfather in the streets of the town below. But he had just as little sympathy with the spiritual or political world which was springing into life around his cradle. The republican Buchanan was his tutor, and he was bred in the religious school of Knox; but he shrank instinctively from Calvinism with its consecration of rebellion, its assertion of human equality, its declaration of the responsibility of kings, while he detected and hated the republican drift of the thinkers of the Renaissance. In later years James denounced the chronicles of both Buchanan and Knox as "infamous invectives," and would have had their readers punished "even as it were their authors risen again." His temper and purpose were in fact simply those of the Kings who had gone before him. He was a Stuart to the core; and from his very boyhood he set himself to do over again the work which the Stuarts had done.

*The work
of the
Stuarts.*

Their work had been the building up of the Scottish realm, its change from a medley of warring nobles into an ordered kingdom. Never had freedom been bought at a dearer price than it was bought by Scotland in its long War of Independence. Wealth and public order alike disappeared. The material prosperity of the country was

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brought to a standstill. The work of civilization was violently interrupted. The work of national unity was all but undone. The Highlanders were parted by a sharp line of division from the Lowlanders, while within the Lowlands themselves feudalism overmastered the crown. The nobles became almost wholly independent. The royal power, under the immediate successors of Bruce, sank into insignificance. From the walls of Stirling the Scotch Kings of that earlier time looked out on a realm where they could not ride thirty miles to north or to south save at the head of a host of armed men. With James the First began the work of building the monarchy up again from this utter ruin; but the wresting of Scotland from the grasp of its nobles was only wrought out in a struggle of life and death. Few figures are more picturesque than the figures of the young Scotch kings as they dash themselves against the iron circle which girds them round in their desperate efforts to rescue the crown from serfdom. They carry their life in their hands; a doom is on them; they die young and by violent deaths. One was stabbed by plotters in his bed-chamber. Another was stabbed in a peasant's hut where he had crawled for refuge after defeat. Another was slain by the bursting of a cannon. The fourth James fell more nobly at Flodden. The fifth died of a broken heart on the news of Solway Moss. But hunted and slain as they were, the kings clung stubbornly to the task they had set themselves.

They stood almost alone. The Scottish people was too weak as yet to form a check on the baronage; and the one force on which the crown could reckon was the force of the Church. To enrich the Church, to bind its prelates closely to the monarchy by the gift of social and political power, was the policy of every Stuart. A greater force than that of the Church lay in the dogged perseverance of the Kings themselves. Little by little their work was done. The great house of Douglas was broken at last.

*The
Stuarts
and the
Reforma-
tion.*

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of Scots.

The ruin of lesser houses followed in its train, and under the fifth of the Jameses Scotland saw itself held firmly in the royal grasp. But the work of the Stuarts was hardly done when it seemed to be undone again by the Reformation. The prelates were struck down. The nobles were enormously enriched. The sovereign again stood alone in the face of the baronage. It was only by playing on their jealousies and divisions that Mary Stuart could withstand the nobles who banded themselves together to overawe the crown. Once she broke their ranks by her marriage with Darnley; and after the ill-fated close of this effort she strove again to break their ranks by her marriage with Bothwell. Again the attempt failed; and Mary fled into life-long exile, while the nobles, triumphant at last in the strife with the Crown, governed Scotland in the name of her child.

James
and the
nobles.

It was thus that in his boyhood James looked on the ruin of all that his fathers had wrought. But the wreck was not as utter as it seemed. Even in the storm of the Reformation the sense of royal authority had not wholly been lost; the craving for public order, and the conviction that order could only be found in obedience to the sovereign, had in fact been quickened by the outbreak of faction; and the rule of Murray and Morton had shown how easily the turbulent nobles could be bent by an energetic use of the royal power. Lonely and helpless as he seemed, James was still King, and he was a King who believed in his kingship. The implicit faith in his own divine right to rule the greatest in the land gave him a strength as great as that of the regents. At seventeen he was strong enough to break the yoke of the Douglasses and to drive them over the English border. At eighteen he could bring the most powerful of the Protestant nobles, the Earl of Gowrie, to the block. A year later indeed the lords were back again; for the Armada was at hand, and Elizabeth distrusted the young King, who was intriguing at Paris and Madrid. English

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of Scots.

help brought back the exiles; "there was no need of words," James said bitterly to the lords as they knelt before him with protestations of loyalty; "weapons had spoken loud enough." But their return was far from undoing his work. Elizabeth's pledges as to the succession, James's alliance with her against the Armada, restored the friendship of England; and once secure against English intervention the King had little difficulty in resuming his mastery at home. A significant ceremony showed that the strife with the nobles was at an end. James summoned them to Edinburgh, and called on them to lay aside their feuds with one another. The pledge was solemnly given, and each noble, "holding his chief enemy by the hand," walked in his doublet to the market-cross of the city, while the people sang aloud for joy.

The policy of the Stuarts had at last reached its end, and James was master of the great houses that had so long overawed the Crown. But he was farther than ever from being absolute master of his realm. Amidst the turmoil of the Reformation a new force had come to the front. This was the Scottish people itself. Till now peasant and burgher had been of small account in the land. The towns were little more than villages. The peasants, scattered thinly over valley and hillside and winning a scant subsistence from a thankless soil, were too few and too poor to be a political force. They were of necessity dependent on their lords; and in the centuries of feudal anarchy which followed the War of Independence the strife of lord against lord made their life a mere struggle for existence. To know neither rest nor safety, to face danger every hour, to plough the field with arms piled carefully beside the furrow, to watch every figure that crossed the hillside in doubt whether it were foe or friend, to be roused from sleep by the slogan of the Highlander or the cry of the borderer as they swept sheep and kye from every homestead in the valley, to bear hunger and thirst and cold and nakedness, to cower within the peel-tower

The
Scotch
people.

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or lurk in the moorland while barn and byre went up in pitiless flame, to mount and ride at a lord's call on forays as pitiless, this was the rough school in which the Scotch peasant was trained through two hundred years. But it was a school in which he learned much. Suffering that would have degraded a meaner race into slaves only hardened and ennobled the temper of the Scotchman. It was from these ages of oppression and lawlessness that he drew the rugged fidelity, the dogged endurance, the shrewdness, the caution, the wariness, the rigid thrift, the noble self-dependence, the patience, the daring, which have distinguished him ever since. Nowhere did the Reformation do a grander work than in Scotland, but it was because nowhere were the minds of men so prepared for its work. The soil was ready for the seed. The developement of a noble manhood brought with it the craving for a spiritual and a national existence, and at the call of the Reformation the Scotch people rose suddenly into a nation and a Church.

Knox.

One well-known figure embodied the moral strength of the new movement. In the King's boyhood, amidst the wild turmoil which followed on Murray's fall, an old man bent with years and toil might have been seen creeping with a secretary's aid to the pulpit of St. Giles. But age and toil were powerless over the spirit of John Knox. "He believed to leave the pulpit at his first entry: but ere he had done with his sermon he was so active and vigorous that he was like to ding the pulpit into blads and spring out of it." It was in vain that men strove to pen the fiery words of the great preacher. "In the opening up of his text," says a devout listener, "he was moderate; but when he entered into application he made me so grew and tremble that I could not hold a pen to write." What gave its grandeur to the doctrine of Knox was his resolute assertion of a Christian order before which the social and political forces of the world about him shrank into insignificance. The meanest peasant, once called of God,

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felt within him a strength that was stronger than the might of nobles, and a wisdom that was wiser than the state-craft of kings. In that mighty elevation of the masses which was embodied in the Calvinist doctrines of election and grace lay the germs of the modern principles of human equality. The fruits of such a teaching soon showed themselves in a new attitude of the people. "Here," said Melville, over the grave of John Knox, "here lies one who never feared the face of man;" and if Scotland still reverences the memory of the reformer it is because at that grave her peasant and her trader learned to look in the face of nobles and kings and "not be ashamed."

The moral power which Knox created was to express itself through the ecclesiastical forms which had been devised by the genius of Calvin. The new force of popular opinion was concentrated and formulated in an ordered system of kirk-sessions and presbyteries and provincial synods, while chosen delegates formed the General Assembly of the Kirk. In this organization of her churches, Scotland saw herself for the first time the possessor of a really representative system, of a popular government. In her Parliaments the peasant had no voice, the burgher a feeble and unimportant one. They were in fact but feudal gatherings of prelates and nobles, whose action was fettered by the precautions of the crown. Of real parliamentary life, such as was seen across the border, not a trace could be found in the assemblies which gathered round the Scottish kings; but a parliamentary life of the keenest and intensest order at once appeared among the lay and spiritual delegates who gathered to the General Assembly of the Kirk. Not only did Presbyterianism bind Scotland together as it had never been bound before by its administrative organization, but by the power it gave the lay elders in each congregation, and by the summons of laymen in an overpowering majority to the earlier Assemblies, it called the people at large to a voice, and as it

The Kirk
and the
people.

CHAP. II. turned out a decisive voice, in the administration of affairs. If its government by ministers gave it the outer look of an ecclesiastical despotism, no Church constitution has proved in practice so democratic as that of Scotland. Its influence in raising the nation at large to a consciousness of its power was shown by the change which passed from the moment of its establishment over the face of Scotch history.

The Kirk and the King. The sphere of action to which it called the people was in fact not a mere ecclesiastical but a national sphere. Formally the Assembly meddled only with matters of religion; but in the creed of the Calvinist, as in the creed of the Catholic, the secular and the religious world were one. It was the office of the Church to enforce good and to rebuke evil; and social and political life fell alike within her "discipline." Feudalism received its death-blow when the noble who had wronged his wife or murdered his tenant sate humbled before the peasant elders on the stool of repentance. The new despotism which was growing up under the form of the monarchy found a sudden arrest in the challenge of the Kirk. When James summoned the preachers before his Council and arraigned their meetings as without warrant and seditious, "Mr. Andrew Melville could not abide it, but broke off upon the King in so zealous, powerful, and irresistible a manner that howbeit the King used his authority in most crabbed and choleric manner, yet Mr. Andrew bore him down, and uttered the commission as from the mighty God, calling the King but 'God's silly vassal;' and taking him by the sleeve, says this in effect, though with much hot reasoning and many interruptions; 'Sir, we will humbly reverence your Majesty always—namely, in public. But since we have this occasion to be with your Majesty in private, and the truth is that you are brought in extreme danger both of your life and crown, and with you the country and kirk of Christ is like to wreck, for not telling you the truth and giving of you a faithful counsel, we must

discharge our duty therein or else be traitors both to Christ and you! And therefore, sir, as divers times before, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus the King, and his kingdom the Kirk, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. And they whom Christ hath called to watch over his kirk and govern his spiritual kingdom have sufficient power and authority so to do both together and severally; the which no Christian king nor prince should control and discharge, but fortify and assist, otherwise not faithful servants nor members of Christ!"

It is idle to set aside words like these as the mere utterances of fanaticism or of priestly arrogance. James and his Council would have made swift work of mere fanatics or of arrogant priests. Why Melville could withdraw unharmed was because a people stood behind him, a people suddenly awakened to a consciousness of its will, and stern in the belief that a divine duty lay on it to press that will on its king. Through all the theocratic talk of the Calvinist ministers we see a popular power that fronts the crown. It is the Scotch people that rises into being under the guise of the Scotch Kirk. The men who led it were men with no official position or material power, for the nobles had stripped the Church of the vast endowments which had lured their sons and the royal bastards within the pale of its ministry. The ministers of the new communion were drawn from the burghers and peasantry or at best from the smaller gentry; and nothing in their social position aided them in withstanding the nobles or the crown. Their strength lay simply in the popular sympathy behind them, in their capacity of rousing national opinion through the pulpit, of expressing it through the Assembly. The claims which such men advanced, ecclesiastical as their garb might be, could not fail to be national in their issues. In struggling against episcopacy they were in fact struggling against any breaking up or impeding of that

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religious organization which alone enabled Scotland to withstand the claims of the crown. In jealously asserting the right of the General Assembly to meet every year and to discuss every question that met it, they were vindicating in the only possible fashion the right of the nation to rule itself in a parliamentary way. In asserting the liberty of the pulpit they were for the first time in the history of Europe recognizing the power of public opinion and fighting for freedom whether of thought or of speech. Strange to modern ears as their language may be, bigoted and narrow as their temper must often seem, it is well to remember the greatness of the debt we owe them. It was their stern resolve, their energy, their endurance that saved Scotland from a civil and religious despotism, and that in saving the liberty of Scotland saved English liberty as well.

Andrew
Melville.

The greatest of the successors of Knox was Andrew Melville. Two years after Knox's death Melville came fresh from a training among the French Huguenots to take up and carry forward his work. With less prophetic fire than his master he possessed as fierce a boldness, a greater disdain of secular compromises, a lofty pride in his calling, a bigoted faith in Calvinism that knew neither rest nor delay in its full establishment throughout the land. As yet the system of Presbyterian faith and discipline, with the synods and assemblies in which it was embodied, though it had practically won its hold over southern Scotland, was without legal sanction. The demand of the ministers for a restitution of the Church lands and the resolve of the nobles not to part with their spoil had caused the rejection of the Book of Discipline by the Estates. The same spirit of greed secured the retention of a nominal episcopacy. Though the name of bishops and archbishops appeared "to many to savour of Papistry," bishops and archbishops were still named to vacant dioceses as milch-cows, through whom the revenues of the sees might be drained by the great nobles. Against such "Tulchan-bishops," as they were nicknamed by the people's scorn.

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a "Tulchan" being a mere calf-skin stuffed with hay by which a cow was persuaded to give her milk after her calf was taken from her, Knox had not cared to protest; he had only taken care that they should be subject to the General Assembly, and deprived of all jurisdiction or authority beyond that of a Presbyterian "Superintendent." His strong political sense hindered a conflict on such a ground with the civil power, and without a conflict it was plain that no change could come. The Regent Morton, Calvinist as he was, supported the cause of Episcopacy, and the fact that bishops formed an integral part of the estates of the realm made any demand for their abolition distasteful to the large mass of men who always shrink from any constitutional revolution.

But Melville threw aside all compromise. In 1580 the General Assembly declared the office of bishop abolished, as having "no sure warrant, authority, or good ground out of the Word of God." In 1581 it adopted a second Book of Discipline which organized the Church on the pure Calvinistic model and advanced the full Calvinistic claim to its spiritual independence and supremacy within the realm. When the Estates refused to sanction this book the Assembly sent it to every presbytery, and its gradual acceptance secured the organization of the Church. It was at this crisis that the appearance of Esme Stuart brought about the first reaction towards a revival of the royal power; and the Council under the guidance of the favourite struck at once at the preachers who denounced it. But their efforts to "tune the pulpits" were met by a bold defiance. "Though all the kings of the earth should call my words treason," replied one minister who was summoned to the Council board, "I am ready by good reason to prove them to be the very truth of God, and if need require to seal them with my blood." Andrew Melville, when summoned on the same charge of seditious preaching, laid a Hebrew Bible on the council table and "resolved to try conclusions on that only." What the

Presby-
terianism
established.

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Council shrank from "trying conclusions" with was the popular enthusiasm which backed these protests. When John Durie was exiled for words uttered in the pulpit, the whole town of Edinburgh met him on his return, "and going up the street with bare heads and loud voices sang to the praise of God till heaven and earth resounded."

But it was this very popularity which roused the young king to action. Boy of eighteen as he was, no sooner had the overthrow of the Douglasses and the judicial murder of Lord Gowrie freed James from the power of the nobles than he faced this new foe. Theologically his opinions were as Calvinistic as those of Melville himself, but in the ecclesiastical fabric of Calvinism, in its organization of the Church, in its annual assemblies, in its public discussion and criticism of acts of government through the pulpit, he saw an organized democracy which threatened his crown. And at this he struck as boldly as his forefathers had struck at the power of feudalism. The nobles, dreading the resumption of church lands, were with the king; and in 1584 an Act of the Estates denounced the judicial and legislative authority assumed by the General Assembly, provided that no subjects, temporal or spiritual, "take upon them to convocate or assemble themselves together for holding of councils, conventions, or assemblies," and demanded a pledge of obedience from every minister. For the moment the ministers submitted; and James prepared to carry out his victory by a policy of religious balance. The Catholic lords were still strong in northern and western Scotland; and firmly as the King was opposed to the dogmas of Catholicism he saw the use he might make of the Catholics as a check on the power of the Congregation. It was with this view that he shielded Lord Huntly and the Catholic nobles while he intrigued with the Guises abroad. But such a policy at such a juncture forced England to intervene. At a moment when the Armada was gathering in the Tagus, Elizabeth felt the need of securing Scotland against any revival of Catholi-

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cism; and her aid enabled the exiled lords to return in triumph in 1585. For the next ten years James was helpless in their hands. He was forced to ally himself with Elizabeth, to offer aid against the Armada, to make a Protestant marriage, to threaten action against Philip, to attack Huntly and the Catholic lords of the north on a charge of correspondence with Spain and to drive them from the realm. The triumph of the Protestant lords was a triumph of the Kirk. In 1592 the Acts of 1584 were repealed; Episcopacy was formally abolished; and the Calvinistic organization of the Church at last received legal sanction. All that James could save was the right of being present at the General Assembly, and of fixing a time and place for its annual meeting. It was in vain that the young King struggled and argued; in vain that he resolutely asserted himself to be supreme in spiritual as in civil matters; in vain that he showed himself a better scholar and a more learned theologian than the men who held him down. The preachers scolded him from the pulpit and bade him "to his knees" to seek pardon for his vanity; while the Assembly chided him for his "banning and swearing" and sent a deputation to confer with his Queen touching the "want of godly exercise among her maids."

The bitter memory of these years of humiliation dwelt with James to the last. They were fiercely recalled, when he mounted the English throne. "A Scottish Presbytery" he exclaimed at the Hampton Court Conference, "as well fitteth with monarchy as God and the Devil." Year after year he watched for the hour of deliverance, and every year brought it nearer. His mother's death gave fresh strength to his throne. The alliance with England, Elizabeth's pledge not to oppose his succession, left him practically heir of the English Crown. Freed from the dread of a Catholic reaction, the Queen was at liberty to indulge in her dread of Calvinism, and to sympathize with the fresh struggle which James was preparing to

James
and
Presby-
terianism

CHAP. II. make against it. Her attitude as well as the growing certainty of his coming greatness as sovereign of both realms, had no doubt their influence in again strengthening the King's position; and his new power was seen in his renewed mastery over the Scottish lords. But this triumph over feudalism was only the opening of a decisive struggle with Calvinism. If he had defeated Huntly and his fellow-plotters, he refused to keep them in exile or to comply with the demand of the Church that he should refuse their services on the ground of religion. He would be King of a nation, he contended, and not of a part of it. The protest was a fair one; but the real secret of the King's policy towards the Catholics, as of his son's after him, was a "King-craft" which aimed at playing off one part of the nation against another to the profit of the crown. "The wisdom of the Council," said a defiant preacher, "is this, that ye must be served with all sorts of men to serve your purpose and grandeur, Jew and Gentile, Papist and Protestant. And because the ministers and Protestants in Scotland are over strong and control the King, they must be weakened and brought low."

*The
struggle
with the
Church.*

It was with this end before him that James set finally to work in 1597. Cool, adroit, firm in his purpose, the young King seized on some wild outbreaks of the pulpit to assert a control over its utterances; a riot in Edinburgh in defence of the ministers enabled him to bring the town to submission by flooding its streets with Highlanders and Borderers; the General Assembly itself was made amenable to royal influence by its summons to Perth where the cooler temper of the northern ministers could be played off against the hot Presbyterianism of the ministers of the Lothians. It was the Assembly itself which consented to curtail the liberty of preaching and the liberty of assembling in presbytery and synod, as well as to make the King's consent needful for the appointment of every minister. What James was as stubbornly resolved on was the restoration of Episcopacy. He wished not only to

bridle but to rule the Church; and it was only through bishops that he could effectively rule it. The old tradition of the Stuarts had looked to the prelates for the support of the crown, and James saw keenly that the new force which had overthrown them was a force which threatened to overthrow the monarchy itself. It was the people which in its religious or its political guise was the assailant of both. And as their foe was the same, so James argued with the shrewd short-sightedness of his race, their cause was the same. "No bishop," ran his famous adage, "no King!" To restore the episcopate was from this moment his steady policy. But its actual restoration only followed on the failure of a long attempt to bring the Assembly round to a project of nominating representatives of itself in the Estates. The presence of such representatives would have strengthened the moral weight of the Parliament, while it diminished that of the Assembly, and in both ways would have tended to the advantage of the Crown. But cowed as the ministers now were, no pressure could bring them to do more than name delegates to vote according to their will in the Estates; and as such a plan foiled the King's scheme James was at last driven to use a statute which empowered him to name bishops as prelates with a seat in the Estates, though they possessed no spiritual status or jurisdiction. In 1600 two such prelates appeared in Parliament; and James followed up his triumph by the publication of his "Basilicon Dôron," an assertion of the divine right and absolute authority of Kings over all orders of men within their realms.

It is only by recalling the early history of James Stuart that we can realize the attitude and temper of the Scottish Sovereign at the moment when the death of Elizabeth called him to the English throne. He came flushed with a triumph over Calvinism and democracy, but embittered by the humiliations he had endured from them, and dreading them as the deadly enemies of his crown. Raised

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of Scots.*

CHAP. II. at last to a greatness of which he had hardly dreamed, he was little likely to yield to a pressure, whether religious or political, against which in his hour of weakness he had fought so hard. Hopes of ecclesiastical change found no echo in a King whose ears were still thrilling with the defiance of Melville and his fellow-ministers, and who among all the charms that England presented to him saw none so attractive as its ordered and obedient Church, its synods that met but at the royal will, its courts that carried out the royal ordinances, its bishops that held themselves to be royal officers. Nor were the hopes of political progress likely to meet with a warmer welcome. Politics with a Stuart meant simply a long struggle for the exaltation of the crown. It was a struggle where success had been won not by a reverence for law or a people's support, but by sheer personal energy, by a blind faith in monarchy and the rights of monarchy, by an unscrupulous use of every weapon which a King possessed. Craft had been met by craft, violence by violence. Justice had been degraded into a weapon in the royal hand. The sacredness of law had disappeared in a strife where all seemed lawful for the preservation of the crown. By means such as these feudalism had been humbled and the long strife with the baronage brought at last to a close. Strife with the people had yet to be waged. But in whatever forms it might present itself, whether in his new land or his old, it would be waged by James as by his successors in the same temper and with the same belief, a belief that the welfare of the nation lay in the unchecked supremacy of the crown, and a temper that held all means lawful for the establishment of such a supremacy.

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CHAPTER III.

THE BREAK WITH THE PARLIAMENT.

1603—1611.

On the sixth of May, 1603, after a stately progress through his new dominions, King James entered London. In outer appearance no sovereign could have jarred more utterly against the conception of an English ruler which had grown up under Plantagenet or Tudor. His big head, his slobbering tongue, his quilted clothes, his rickety legs stood out in as grotesque a contrast with all that men recalled of Henry or Elizabeth as his gabble and rhodomontade, his want of personal dignity, his buffoonery, his coarseness of speech, his pedantry, his personal cowardice. Under this ridiculous exterior indeed lay no small amount of moral courage and of intellectual ability. James was a ripe scholar, with a considerable fund of shrewdness, of mother-wit, and ready repartee. His canny humour lights up the political and theological controversies of the time with quaint incisive phrases, with puns and epigrams and touches of irony which still retain their savour. His reading, especially in theological matters, was extensive; and he was already a voluminous author on subjects which ranged from predestination to tobacco. But his shrewdness and learning only left him, in the phrase of Henry the Fourth of France, "the wisest fool in Christendom." He had in fact the temper of a pedant, a pedant's conceit, a pedant's love of theories, and a pedant's inability to bring his theories into any relation with actual facts. It

James the
First.

CHAP. III. was this fatal defect that marred his political abilities. The Break with the Parliament. 1603-1611. As a statesman he had shown no little capacity in his smaller realm; his cool humour and good temper had held even Melville at bay; he had known how to wait and how to strike; and his patience and boldness had been rewarded with a fair success. He had studied foreign affairs as busily as he had studied Scotch affairs; and of the temper and plans of foreign courts he probably possessed a greater knowledge than any Englishman save Robert Cecil. But what he never possessed, and what he never could gain, was any sort of knowledge of England or Englishmen. He came to his new home a Scotchman, a foreigner, strange to the life, the thoughts, the traditions of the English people. And he remained strange to them to the last. A younger man might have insensibly imbibed the temper of the men about him. A man of genius would have flung himself into the new world of thought and feeling and made it his own. But James was neither young nor a man of genius. He was already in middle age when he crossed the Border; and his cleverness and his conceit alike blinded him to the need of any adjustment of his conclusions or his prejudices to the facts which fronted him.

The foreign rule.

It was this estrangement from the world of thought and feeling about them which gave its peculiar colour to the rule of the Stuarts. It was not the first time that England had submitted to foreign kings. But it was the first time that England experienced a foreign rule. Foreign notions of religion, foreign maxims of state, foreign conceptions of the attitude of the people or the nobles towards the Crown, foreign notions of the relation of the Crown to the people, formed the policy of James as of his successors. For the Stuarts remained foreigners to the last. Their line filled the English throne for more than eighty years; but like the Bourbons they forgot nothing and they learned nothing. To all influences indeed save English influences they were accessible enough. As

James was steeped in the traditions of Scotland, so Charles the First was open to the traditions of Spain. The second Charles and the second James reflected in very different ways the temper of France. But what no Stuart seemed able to imbibe or to reflect was the temper of England. The strange medley of contradictory qualities which blended in the English character, its love of liberty and its love of order, its prejudice and open-mindedness, its religious enthusiasm and its cool good sense, remained alike unintelligible to them. And as they failed to understand England, so in many ways England failed to understand them. It underrated their ability, nor did it do justice to their aims. Its insular temper found no hold on a policy which was far more European than insular. Its practical sense recoiled from the unpractical cleverness that, while it seldom said a foolish thing, yet never did a wise one.

From the first this severance between English feeling and the feeling of the king was sharply marked. If war and taxation had dimmed the popularity of Elizabeth in her later years, England had still a reverence for the Queen who had made her great. But James was hardly over the border when he was heard expressing his scorn of the character and statecraft of his predecessor. Her policy, whether at home or abroad, he came resolved to undo. Men who had fought side by side with Dutchmen and Huguenot against Spaniard and Leaguer heard angrily that the new King was seeking for peace with Spain, that he was negotiating with the Papacy, while he met the advances of France with a marked coolness, and denounced the Hollanders as rebels against their king. It was with scarcely less anger that they saw the stern system of repression which had prevailed through the close of Elizabeth's reign relaxed in favour of the Catholics, and recusants released from the payments of fines. It was clear that both at home and abroad James purposed to withdraw from that struggle with Catholicism which the hotter

CHAP. III. The Break with the Parliament. 1603-1611.

The new policy.

CHAP. III. Protestants looked upon as a battle for God. What the King really aimed at was the security of his throne. The Catholics alone questioned his title; and a formal excommunication by Rome would have roused them to dispute his accession. James had averted this danger by intrigues both with the Papal Court and the English Catholics during the later years of Elizabeth; and his vague assurances had mystified the one and prevented the others from acting. The disappointment of the Catholics when no change followed on the King's accession found vent in a wild plot for the seizure of his person, devised by a priest named Watson; and the alarm this created quickened James to a redemption of his pledges. In July, 1603, the leading Catholics were called before the Council and assured that the fines for recusancy would no longer be exacted; while an attempt was made to open a negotiation with Rome and to procure the support of the Pope for the new government. But the real strength of the Catholic party lay in the chance of aid from Spain. So long as the war continued they would look to Spain for succour, and the influence of Spain would be exerted to keep them in antagonism to the Crown. Nor was this the only ground for a cessation of hostilities. The temper of James was peaceful; the royal treasury was exhausted; and the continuance of the war necessitated a close connexion with the Calvinistic and republican Hollanders. At the same time therefore that the Catholics were assured of a relaxation of the penal laws, negotiations for peace were opened with Spain.

James and the Puritans. However justifiable such steps might be, it was certain that they would rouse alarm and discontent among the sterner Protestants. For a time however it seemed as if concessions on one side were to be balanced by concessions on the other, as if the tolerance which had been granted to the Catholic would be extended to the Puritan. James had hardly crossed the border when he was met by what was termed the Millenary Petition,

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from a belief that it was signed by a thousand of the English clergy. It really received the assent of some eight hundred, or of about a tenth of the clergy of the realm. The petitioners asked for no change in the government or organization of the Church, but for a reform of its courts, the removal of superstitious usages from the Book of Common Prayer, the disuse of lessons from the apocryphal books of Scripture, a more rigorous observance of Sundays, and the provision and training of ministers who could preach to the people. Concessions on these points would as yet have satisfied the bulk of the Puritans; and for a while it seemed as if concession was purposed. The King not only received the petition, but promised a conference of bishops and divines in which it should be discussed. Ten months however were suffered to pass before the pledge was redeemed; and a fierce protest from the University of Oxford in the interval gave little promise of a peaceful settlement. The university denounced the Puritan demands as preludes of a Presbyterian system in which the clergy would "have power to bind their king in chains and their prince in links of iron, that is (in their learning) to censure him, to enjoin him penance, to excommunicate him, yea—in case they see cause—to proceed against him as a tyrant."

The warning was hardly needed by James. The voice of Melville was still in his ears when he summoned four Puritan ministers to meet the Archbishop and eight of his suffragans at Hampton Court in January 1604. From the first he showed no purpose of discussing the grievances alleged in the petition. He revelled in the opportunity for a display of his theological reading; but he viewed the Puritan demands in a purely political light. He charged the petitioners with aiming at a Scottish presbytery, "where Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my Council and all their proceedings. Stay," he went on with amusing vehemence, "stay, I pray you, for one seven years before you demand

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Hampton
Court
confer-
ence.

CHAP. III. that from me, and if you find me pursy and fat and my
 The Break windpipe stuffed, I will perhaps hearken to you, for let that
 with the government be once up, and I am sure I shall be kept in
 ment. health." No words could have better shown the new King's
 1603- unconsciousness that he had passed into a land where
 1611. parliaments were realities, and where the "censure" of
 king and council was a national tradition. But neither
 his theology nor his politics met with any protest from
 the prelates about him. On the contrary, the bishops
 declared that the insults James showered on their oppo-
 nents were inspired by the Holy Ghost. The Puritans
 however still ventured to question his infallibility, and
 the King broke up the conference with a threat which
 disclosed the policy of the Crown. "I will make them
 conform," he said of the remonstrants, "or I will harry
 them out of the land!"

*The
 Parliament
 of
 1604.*

It is only when we recall the temper of England at
 the time that we can understand the profound emotion
 which was roused by threats such as these. Three
 months after the conference at Hampton Court the mem-
 bers were gathering to the first parliament of the new
 reign; and the Parliament of 1604 met in another
 mood from that of any parliament which had met for a
 hundred years. Under the Tudors the Houses had
 more than once at great crises in our history withstood
 the policy of the Crown. But in the main that policy had
 been their own; and it was the sense of this oneness in
 aim which had averted any final collision even in the
 strife with Elizabeth. But this trust in the unity of
 the nation and the Crown was now roughly shaken. The
 squires and merchants who thronged the benches at West-
 minster listened with coldness and suspicion to the self-
 confident assurances of the King. "I bring you," said
 James, "two gifts, one peace with foreign nations, the
 other union with Scotland;" and a project was laid before
 them for a union of the two kingdoms under the name
 of Great Britain. "By what laws," asked Bacon, "shall

this Britain be governed?" Great in fact as were the advan-
 tages of such a scheme, the House showed its sense of the
 political difficulties involved in it by referring it to a com-
 mission. James in turn showed his resentment by passing
 over the attempts made to commute for a fixed sum the
 oppressive rights of Purveyance and Wardship. But what
 the House was really set upon was religious reform;
 and the first step of the Commons had been the naming
 of a committee to frame bills for the redress of the more
 crying ecclesiastical grievances. The influence of the
 Crown secured the rejection of these bills by the Lords;
 and the irritation of the Lower House showed itself in an
 outspoken address to the King. The Parliament, it said,
 had come together in a spirit of peace. "Our desires
 were of peace only, and our device of unity." Their aim
 had been to put an end to the long-standing dissension
 among the ministers, and to preserve uniformity by the
 abandonment of "a few ceremonies of small importance,"
 by the redress of some ecclesiastical abuses, and by the
 establishment of an efficient training for a preaching
 clergy. If they had waived their right to deal with these
 matters during the old age of Elizabeth, they asserted it
 now. "Let your Majesty be pleased to receive public
 information from your Commons in parliament, as well of
 the abuses in the Church as in the civil state and govern-
 ment." Words yet bolder, and which sound like a prelude
 to the Petition of Right, met the claim of absolutism which
 was so frequently on the new king's lips. "Your majesty
 would be misinformed," said the address, "if any man
 should deliver that the Kings of England have any absolute
 power in themselves, either to alter religion or to make any
 laws concerning the same, otherwise than as in temporal
 causes, by consent of Parliament."

The address was met by a petulant scolding, and as the
 Commons met coldly the king's request for a subsidy the
 Houses were adjourned. James at once assumed the title to
 which Parliament had deferred its assent, of King of Great

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*The
 Canons of
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CHAP. III. Britain; while the support of the Crown emboldened the bishops to a fresh defiance of the Puritan pressure. The act of Elizabeth which gave parliamentary sanction to the Thirty-nine Articles compelled ministers to subscribe only to those which concerned the faith and the sacraments, and thus implicitly refused to compel their signatures to the articles which related to points of discipline and Church government. The compromise had been observed from 1571 till now; but the Convocation of 1604 by its canons required the subscription of the clergy to the articles touching rites and ceremonies. The King showed his approval of this step by raising its prime mover, Bancroft, to the vacant see of Canterbury; and Bancroft added to the demand of subscription a requirement of rigid conformity with the rubrics on the part of all beneficed clergymen. In the spring of 1605 three hundred of the Puritan clergy were driven from their livings for a refusal to comply with these demands.

Fresh breach with the Catholics. If James had come to his new throne with dreams of conciliation and of a greater unity among his subjects, his dream was to be speedily dispelled. At the moment when the persecution of Bancroft announced a final breach between the Crown and the Puritans, a revival of the old rigour made a fresh breach between the Crown and the Catholics. In remitting the fines for recusancy James had never purposed to suffer any revival of Catholicism; and in the opening of 1604 a proclamation which bade all Jesuits and seminary priests depart from the land proved that on its political side the Elizabethan policy was still adhered to. But the effect of the remission of fines was at once to swell the numbers of avowed Catholics. In the diocese of Chester the number of recusants increased by a thousand. Rumours of Catholic conversions spread a panic which showed itself in an act of the Parliament of 1604 confirming the statutes of Elizabeth; and to this James gave his assent. He promised indeed that the statute should remain inopera-

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tive; but rumours of his own conversion, which sprang from his secret negotiation with Rome, so angered the King that in the spring of 1605 he bade the judges put it in force, while the fines for recusancy were levied more strictly than before. The disappointment of their hopes, the quick breach of the pledges so solemnly given to them, drove the Catholics to despair. They gave fresh life to a conspiracy which a small knot of bigots had been fruitlessly striving to bring to an issue since the King's accession. Catesby, a Catholic zealot who had taken part in the rising of Essex, had busied himself during the last years of Elizabeth in preparing for a revolt at the Queen's death, and in seeking for his project the aid of Spain. He was joined in his plans by two fellow-zealots, Winter and Wright; but the scheme was still unripe when James peaceably mounted the throne; and for the moment his pledge of toleration put an end to it. But the zeal of the plotters was revived by the banishment of the priests; and the conspiracy at last took the form of a plan for blowing up both Houses of Parliament and profiting by the terror caused by such a stroke. In Flanders Catesby found a new assistant in his schemes, Guido Fawkes, an Englishman who was serving in the army of the Archduke; and on his return to England he was joined by Thomas Percy, a cousin of the Earl of Northumberland and a pensioner of the king's guard. In May, 1604, the little group hired a tenement near the Parliament house, and set themselves to dig a mine beneath its walls.

As yet however they stood alone. The bulk of the Catholics were content with the relaxation of the penal laws; and in the absence of any aid the plotters were forced to suspend their work. It was not till the sudden change in the royal policy that their hopes revived. But with the renewal of persecution Catesby at once bestirred himself; and at the close of 1604 the lucky discovery of a cellar beneath the Parliament House facilitated the execution of this plan. Barrels of gunpowder were placed

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The
Gunpowder
Plot.

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in the cellar, and the little group waited patiently for the fifth of November, 1605, when the Houses were again summoned to assemble. In the interval their plans widened into a formidable conspiracy. It was arranged that on the destruction of the King and the Parliament the Catholics should rise, seize the young princes, use the general panic to make themselves masters of the realm, and call for aid from the Spaniards in Flanders. With this view Catholics of greater fortune, such as Sir Everard Digby and Francis Tresham, were admitted to Catesby's confidence, and supplied money for the larger projects he designed. Arms were bought in Flanders, horses were held in readiness, a meeting of Catholic gentlemen was brought about under show of a hunting party to serve as the beginning of a rising. Wonderful as was the secrecy with which the plot was concealed, the cowardice of Tresham at the last moment gave a clue to it by a letter to Lord Monteagle, his relative, which warned him to absent himself from the Parliament on the fatal day; and further information brought about the discovery of the cellar and of Guido Fawkes, who was charged with its custody. The hunting party broke up in despair, the conspirators, chased from county to county, were either killed or sent to the block; and Garnet, the Provincial of the English Jesuits, was brought to trial and executed. Though he had shrunk from all part in the plot, its existence had been made known to him by another Jesuit, Greenway; and horror-stricken as he represented himself to have been he had kept the secret and left the Parliament to its doom.

The
Impositions.

The failure of such a plot necessarily gives strength to a government; and for the moment the Parliament was drawn closer to the King by the deliverance from a common peril. When the Houses again met in 1606 they listened in a different temper to the demand for a subsidy. The needs of the Treasury indeed were great. Elizabeth had left behind her a war expenditure, and a debt of

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four hundred thousand pounds. The first ceased with the peace, but the debt remained; and the prodigality of James was fast raising the charges of the Crown in time of peace to as high a level as they had reached under his predecessor in time of war. The Commons voted a sum which was large enough to meet the royal debt. The fixed charges of the Crown they held should be met by its ordinary revenues; but James had no mind to bring his expenditure down to the level of Elizabeth's. The growth of English commerce offered a means of recruiting his treasury which seemed to lie within the limits of customary law; and of this he availed himself. The right of the Crown to levy impositions on exports and imports other than those of wool, leather, and tin, had been the last financial prerogative for which the Edwards had struggled. They had been forced indeed to abandon it; but the tradition of such a right lingered on at the royal council-board; and under the Tudors the practice had been to some slight extent revived. A duty on imports had been imposed in one or two instances by Mary, and this impost had been extended by Elizabeth to currants and wine. These instances however were too trivial and exceptional to break in upon the general usage; but a more dangerous precedent had been growing up in the duties which the great trading companies, such as those to the Levant and to the Indies, were allowed to exact from merchants, in exchange—as was held—for the protection they afforded them in far-off and dangerous seas. The Levant Company was now dissolved, and James seized on the duties it had levied as lapsing naturally to the Crown.

The Parliament at once protested against these impositions; but the prospect of a fresh struggle with the Commons told less with the King than the prospect of a revenue which might free him from dependance on the Commons altogether. His fanatical belief in the rights and power of the Crown hindered all sober judgement of such a question. James cared quite as much

Bates's
case.

CHAP. III. to assert his absolute authority as to fill his treasury.
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 ment.
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 In the course of 1606 therefore the case of a Levant merchant called Bates, who refused to pay the imposition, was brought before the Exchequer Chamber. The judgement of the court justified the King's confidence in his claim. It went far beyond the original bounds of the case itself, or the right of the Crown to levy on the ground of protection the dues which had been levied on that ground by the leading companies. It asserted the King's right to levy what customs duties he would. "All customs," said the judges, "are the effects of foreign commerce; but all affairs of commerce and treaties with foreign nations belong to the King's absolute power. He therefore who has power over the cause has power over the effect." The importance of such a decision could hardly be overrated. English commerce was growing fast. English merchants were fighting their way to the Spice Islands, and establishing settlements in the dominions of the Mogul. The judgement gave James a revenue which was certain to grow rapidly, and whose growth would go far to free the Crown from any need of resorting for supplies to Parliament.

The
 Post-Nati.
 But no immediate step was taken to give effect to the judgement; and the Commons contented themselves with a protest against impositions at the close of the session of 1606. When they reassembled in the following year their attention was absorbed by the revival of the questions which sprang from the new relations of Scotland to England through their common king. There was now no question of a national union. The commission to which the whole matter had been referred had reported in favour of the abolition of hostile laws, the establishment of a general free trade between the two kingdoms, and the naturalization as Englishmen of all living Scotchmen who had been born before the King's accession to the English throne. The judges had already given their opinion that all born after it were naturalized Englishmen by force of their allegiance to a sovereign who had become King of England. The

constitutional danger of such a theory was easily seen. Had the marriage of Philip and Mary produced a son, every Spaniard and every Fleming would under it have counted as Englishmen, and England would have been absorbed in the mass of the Spanish monarchy. The opinion of the judges in fact implied that nationality hung not on the existence of the nation itself, but on its relation to a king. It was to escape from such a theory that the Commons asked that the question should be waived, and offered on that condition to naturalize all Scotchmen whatever by statute. But James would not assent. To him the assertion of a right inherent in the Crown was far dearer than a peaceful settlement of the matter; the bills for free trade were dropped; and on the adjournment of the Houses a case was brought before the Exchequer Chamber; and the naturalization of the "Post-nati," as Scots born after the King's accession were styled, established by a formal judgement.

James had won a victory for his prerogative; but he had won it at the cost of Scotland. To the smaller and poorer kingdom the removal of all obstacles to her commerce with England would have been an inestimable gain. The intercourse which it would have necessitated could hardly have failed in time to bring about a more perfect union. But as the King's reign drew on, the union of the two realms seemed more distant than ever. Bacon's shrewd question, "under which laws is this Britain to be governed," took fresh meaning as men saw James asserting in Scotland an all but absolute authority, and breaking down the one constitutional check which had hitherto hampered him. The energy which he had shown in his earlier combat with the democratic forces embodied in the Kirk was not likely to slacken on his accession to the southern throne. It was in the General Assembly that the new force of public opinion took legislative and administrative form; and even before he crossed the border James had succeeded in asserting a right to convene and

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be personally present at the proceedings of the General Assembly. But once King of England he could venture on heavier blows. In spite of his assent to an act legalizing its annual convention James hindered any meeting of the General Assembly for five successive years by repeated prorogations. The protests of the clergy were roughly met. When nineteen ministers appeared in 1605 at Aberdeen and, in defiance of the prorogation, constituted themselves an Assembly, they were called before the Council, and on refusal to own its jurisdiction banished as traitors from the realm. Of the leaders who remained the boldest were summoned in 1606 with Andrew Melville to confer with the king in England on his projects of change. On their refusal to betray the freedom of the Church they were committed to prison; and an epigram which Melville wrote on the usages of the English communion was seized on as a ground for bringing him before the English Privy Council with Bancroft at its head. But the insolence of the Primate fell on ears less patient than those of the Puritans he had insulted at Hampton Court. As he stood at the council table Melville seized the Archbishop by the sleeves of his rochet, and shaking them in his manner, called them Popish rags and marks of the beast. He was sent to the Tower, and released after some years of imprisonment only to go into exile.

Submission
of
the Kirk.

The trial of Scotchmen before a foreign court, the imprisonment of Scotchmen in foreign prisons, were steps that showed the powerlessness of James to grasp the first principles of law; but they were effective for the purpose at which he aimed. They struck terror into the Scotch ministers. Their one weapon lay in the enthusiasm of the people; but, strongly as Scotch enthusiasm might tell on a king at Edinburgh it was powerless over a king at London. The time had come when James might pass on from merely silencing the General Assembly to the use of it in the enslavement of the Church. Successful as

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he had been in gagging the pulpits and silencing the Assembly he had been as yet less successful in his efforts to revive the power of the crown over the Church by a restoration of Episcopacy. He had nominated a few bishops, and had won back for them their old places in Parliament; but his bishops remained purely secular nobles, unrecognized in their spiritual capacity by the Church, and without any ecclesiastical jurisdiction. It was in vain that James had striven to bring Melville and his fellows to any recognition of prelacy. But with their banishment and imprisonment the field was clear for more vigorous action. Deprived of their leaders, threatened with bonds and exile, deserted by the nobles, ill supported as yet by the mass of the people, to whom the real nature of their struggle was unknown, the Scotch ministers bent at last before the pressure of the Crown. They still shrank indeed from any formal acceptance of episcopacy; but they allowed the bishops to act as perpetual moderators or presidents in the synods of their presbyteries.

With such moderators the General Assembly might be suffered to meet. Their influence in fact secured the return of royal nominees to Assemblies which met in 1608 and in 1610; and in the second of these assemblies episcopacy was at last formally recognized by the Scottish Church. The bishops were owned as permanent heads of each provincial synod; the power of ordination was committed to them; the ecclesiastical sentences pronounced by synod or presbytery were henceforth to be submitted for their approval. The new organization of the Church was at once carried out. The vacant sees were filled. Two archbishops were created at St. Andrew's and Glasgow, and set at the head of Courts of High Commission for their respective provinces; while three of the prelates were sent to receive consecration in England, and on their return communicated it to their fellow-bishops. With such a measure of success James was fairly content. The prelacy he had

Restoration
of Scotch
Episcopacy.

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revived fell far short of English episcopacy; to the eyes of religious dogmatists such as Laud indeed it seemed little better than the presbyterianism it superseded. But the aim of James was political rather than religious. He had no dislike for presbyterianism as a system of Church-government; what he dreaded was the popular force to which it gave form in its synods and assemblies, and which, in the guise of ecclesiastical independence, was lifting the nation into equality with the Crown. In seizing on the control of the Church through his organized prelacy James held himself to have seized the control of the forces which acted through the Church, and to have won back that mastery of his realm which the Reformation had reft from the Scottish kings.

England
and the
Prerogative.

What he had really done was to commit the Scotch Crown to a lasting struggle with the religious impulses of the Scottish people. The cause of episcopacy was ruined by his triumph. Belief in bishops ceased to be possible for a Scotchman when bishops were forced on Scotland as mere tools of the royal will. Presbyterianism on the other hand became identified with patriotism. It was no longer an ecclesiastical system; it was the guise under which national freedom and even national existence were to struggle against an arbitrary rule,—against a rule which grew more and more the rule of a foreign king. Nor was the sight of the royal triumph lost on the southern realm. England had no love for presbyters or hatred for bishops; but as she saw the last check on the royal authority broken down over the border she looked the more jealously at the effort which James was making to break down such checks at home. Under Elizabeth proclamations had been sparingly used, and for the most part only to enforce what was already the law. Not only was their number multiplied under James, but their character was changed. They created new offences, imposed new penalties, and directed offenders to be brought before courts which had no legal jurisdiction over them. To narrow indeed the sphere of the common

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law seemed the special aim of the royal policy; the four counties of the western border had been severed from the rest of England and placed under the jurisdiction of the President and Council of Wales, a court whose constitution and procedure rested on the sheer will of the Crown. The province of the spiritual courts was as busily enlarged. It was in vain that the judges, spurred no doubt by the old jealousy between civil and ecclesiastical lawyers, entertained appeals against the High Commission, and strove by a series of decisions to set bounds to its limitless claims of jurisdiction or to restrict its powers of imprisonment to cases of schism and heresy. The judges were powerless against the Crown; and James was vehement in his support of courts which were closely bound up with his own prerogative. What work the courts spiritual might be counted on to do, if the King had his way, was plain from the announcement of a civilian named Cowell that "the King is above law by his absolute power," and that "notwithstanding his oath he may alter and suspend any particular law that seemeth hurtful to the public estate."

The
claims of
the King.

Cowell's book was suppressed on a remonstrance of the House of Commons; but the party of passive obedience grew fast. Even before his accession to the English throne James had formulated his theory of rule in a work on *The True Law of Free Monarchy*, and announced that "although a good king will frame his actions to be according to law, yet he is not bound thereto, but of his own will and for example giving to his subjects." With the Tudor statesmen who used the phrase, "an absolute king" or "an absolute monarchy" meant a sovereign or rule complete in themselves and independent of all foreign or Papal interference. James chose to regard the words as implying the freedom of the monarch from all control by law or from responsibility to anything but his own royal will. The King's theory was already a system of government; it was soon to become a doctrine which bishops preached from the pulpit, and for which brave men laid their heads

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on the block. The Church was quick to adopt its sovereign's discovery. Some three years after his accession Convocation in its book of Canons denounced as a fatal error the assertion that "all civil power, jurisdiction, and authority were first derived from the people and disordered multitude, or either is originally still in them, or else is deduced by their consent naturally from them; and is not God's ordinance originally descending from him and depending upon him." In strict accordance with the royal theory these doctors declared sovereignty in its origin to be the prerogative of birthright, and inculcated passive obedience to the Crown as a religious obligation. The doctrine of passive obedience was soon taught in the schools. A few years before the King's death the University of Oxford decreed solemnly that "it was in no case lawful for subjects to make use of force against their princes, or to appear offensively or defensively in the field against them." But what gave most force to such teaching were the reiterated expressions of James himself. If the King's "arrogant speeches" woke resentment in the Parliaments to which they were addressed, they created by sheer force of repetition a certain amount of belief in the arbitrary power they challenged for the Crown. One sentence from a speech delivered in the Star Chamber may serve as an instance of their tone. "As it is atheism and blasphemy to dispute what God can do, so," said James, "it is presumption and a high contempt in a subject to dispute what a king can do, or to say that a king cannot do this or that."

*Distrust
of the
King.*

"If the practice follow the positions," commented a thoughtful observer on words such as these, "we are not likely to leave to our successors the freedom we received from our forefathers." Their worst effect was in changing the whole attitude of the nation towards the Crown. England had trusted the Tudors, it distrusted the Stuarts. The mood indeed both of King and people had grown to be a mood of jealousy, of suspicion, which, inevitable

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as it was, often did injustice to the purpose of both. King James looked on the squires and merchants of the House of Commons as his Stuart predecessors had looked on the Scotch baronage. He regarded their discussions, their protests, their delays, not as the natural hesitation of men called suddenly, and with only half knowledge, to the settlement of great and complex questions, but as proofs of a conspiracy to fetter and impede the action of the Crown. The Commons on the other hand listened to the King's hectoring speeches, not as the chance talk of a clever and garrulous theorist, but as proofs of a settled purpose to change the character of the monarchy. In a word, James had succeeded in some seven years of rule in breaking utterly down that mutual understanding between the Crown and its subjects on which all government, save a sheer despotism, must necessarily rest.

It was this mutual distrust which brought about the final breach between the Parliament and the King. The question of the impositions had seemed for a while to have been waived. The Commons had contented themselves with a protest against their levy. James had for two years hesitated in acting on the judgement which asserted his right to levy them. But the needs of the treasury became too great to admit of further hesitation, and in 1608 a royal proclamation imposed customs duties on many articles of import and export. The new duties came in fast; but unluckily the royal debt grew faster. To a king fresh from the penniless exchequer of Holyrood the wealth of England seemed boundless; money was lavished on court-feasts and favourites; and with each year the expenditure of James reached a higher level. It was in vain that Robert Cecil took the treasury into his own hands, and strove to revive the frugal traditions of Elizabeth. The King's prodigality undid his minister's work; and in 1610 Cecil was forced to announce to his master that the annual revenue of the Crown must be supplemented by fresh grants from Parliament. The scheme which Cecil laid before the King and

*Robert
Cecil.*

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the Commons is of great importance as the last effort of that Tudor policy which had so long hindered an outbreak of strife between the nation and the Crown. Differ as the Tudors might from one another, they were alike in their keen sense of national feeling and in their craving to carry it along with them. Masterful as Henry or Elizabeth might be, what they "prized most dearly," as the Queen confessed, was "the love and goodwill of their subjects." They prized it because they knew the force it gave them. And Cecil knew it too. He had grown up among the traditions of the Tudor rule. He had been trained by his father in the system of Elizabeth. Whether as a minister of the Queen, or as a minister of her successor, he had striven to carry that system into effect. His conviction of the supremacy of the Crown was as strong as that of James himself, but it was tempered by as strong a conviction of the need of the national good-will. He had seen what weight the passionate enthusiasm that gathered round Elizabeth gave to her policy both at home and abroad; and he saw that a time was drawing near when the same weight would be needed by the policy of the Crown.

Protes-
tantism in
Germany,

Slowly but steadily the clouds of religious strife were gathering over central Europe. From such a strife, should it once break out in war, England could not hold aloof unless the tradition of its policy was wholly set aside. And so long as Cecil lived, whatever change might take place at home, in all foreign affairs the Elizabethan policy was mainly adhered to. Peace indeed was made with Spain; but a close alliance with the United Provinces, and a more guarded alliance with France, held the ambition of Spain in check almost as effectually as war. The peace in fact set England free to provide against dangers which threatened to become greater than those from Spanish aggression in the Netherlands. Warily as war in that quarter might drag on, it was clear that the Dutchmen could hold their own, and that all that Spain and Catholicism could hope

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for was to save the rest of the Low Countries from their grasp. But no sooner was danger from the Spanish branch of the House of Austria at an end than Protestantism had to guard itself against its German branch. The vast possessions of Charles the Fifth had been parted between his brother and his son. While Philip took Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and the Indies, Ferdinand took the German dominions, the hereditary Duchy of Austria, the Suabian lands, Tyrol, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola. Marriage and fortune brought to the German branch the dependent states of Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia; and it had succeeded in retaining the Imperial crown. The wisdom and moderation of Ferdinand and his successor secured tranquillity for Germany through some fifty years. They were faithful to the Peace of Passau, which had been wrested by Maurice of Saxony from Charles the Fifth, and which secured both Protestants and Catholics in the rights and possessions which they held at the moment it was made. Their temper was tolerant; and they looked on quietly while Protestantism spread over Southern Germany and solved all doubtful questions which arose from the treaty in its own favour. The Peace had provided that all church land already secularized should remain so; of the later secularization of other church land it said nothing. It provided that states already Protestant should abide so, but it said nothing of the right of other states to declare themselves Protestant. Doubt however was set aside by religious zeal; new states became Lutheran, and eight great bishoprics of the north were secularized. Meanwhile the new faith was spreading fast over the dominions of the House of Austria. The nobles of their very Duchy embraced it: Moravia, Silesia, Hungary all but wholly abandoned Catholicism. Through the earlier reign of Elizabeth it seemed as if by a peaceful progress of conversion Germany was about to become Protestant.

German Catholicism was saved by the Catholic revival and by the energy of the Jesuits. It was saved perhaps

The
Catholic
reaction.

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ment.
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as much by the strife which broke out in the heart of German Protestantism between Lutheran and Calvinist. But the Catholic zealots were far from resting content with having checked the advance of their opponents. They longed to undo their work. They did not question the Treaty of Passau or the settlement made by it; but they disputed the Protestant interpretation of its silences; they called for the restoration to Catholicism of all church lands secularized, of all states converted from the older faith, since its conclusion. Their new attitude woke little terror in the Lutheran states. The treaty secured their rights, and their position in one unbroken mass stretching across Northern Germany seemed to secure them from Catholic attack. But the Calvinistic states, Hesse, Baden, and the Palatinate, felt none of this security. If the treaty were strictly construed it gave them no right of existence, for Calvinism had arisen since the treaty was signed. Their position too was a hazardous one. They lay girt in on all sides but one by Catholic territories, here by the bishops of the Rhineland with the Spaniards in Franche Comté and the Netherlands to back them, there by Bavaria and by the bishoprics of the Main. Foes such as these indeed the Calvinists could fairly have faced; but behind them lay the House of Austria; and the influence of the Catholic revival was at last telling on the Austrian princes. In 1606 an attempt of the Emperor Rudolf to force Catholicism again on his people woke revolt in the Duchy; and though the troubles were allayed by his removal, his successor Matthias persevered though more quietly in the same anti-Protestant policy.

The
Union
and the
League.

The accession of the House of Austria to the number of their foes created a panic among the Calvinistic states, and in 1608 they joined together in a Protestant Union with Christian of Anhalt at its head. But zeal was at once met by zeal; and the formation of the Union was answered by the formation of a Catholic League among the states about it under Maximilian, the Duke of Bavaria,

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Both were ostensibly for defensive purposes: but the peace of Europe was at once shaken. Ambitious schemes woke up in every quarter. Spain saw the chance of securing a road along western Germany which would enable her to bring her whole force to bear on the rebels in the Low Countries. France on the other hand had recovered from the exhaustion of her own religious wars, and was eager to take up again the policy pursued by Francis the First and his son, of weakening and despoiling Germany by feeding and using religious strife across the Rhine. In 1610 a quarrel over Cleves afforded a chance for her intervention, and it was only an assassin's dagger that prevented Henry the Fourth from doing that which Richelieu was to do. England alone could hinder a second outbreak of the Wars of Religion; but the first step in such a policy must be a reconciliation between King and Parliament. James might hector about the might of the Crown, but he had no power of acting with effect abroad save through the national good will. Without troops and without supplies, his threat of war would be ridiculous; and without the backing of such a threat Cecil knew well that mediation would be a mere delusion. Whether for the conduct of affairs at home or abroad it was needful to bring the widening quarrel between the King and the Parliament to a close; and it was with a settled purpose of reconciliation that Cecil brought James to call the Houses again together in 1610.

He never dreamed of conciliating the Commons by yielding unconditionally to their demands. Cecil looked on the right to levy impositions as legally established; and the Tudor sovereigns had been as keen as James himself in seizing on any rights that the law could be made to give them. But as a practical statesman he saw that the right could only be exercised to the profit of the Crown if it was exercised with the good-will of the people. To win that good-will it was necessary to put the impositions on a legal footing; while for the conduct of affairs it was necessary to raise permanently the revenue

The Great
Contract.

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with the
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ment.1603-
1611.*Attitude
of the
Commons.*

of the Crown. On the Tudor theory of politics these were concessions made by the nation to the King; and it was the Tudor practise to buy such concessions by counter-concessions made by the King to the nation. Materials for such a bargain existed in the feudal rights of the Crown, above all those of marriage and wardship, which were harassing to the people while they brought little profit to the exchequer. The Commons had more than once prayed for some commutation of these rights, and Cecil seized on their prayer as the ground of an accommodation. He proposed that James should waive his feudal rights, that he should submit to the sanction by Parliament of the impositions already levied, and that he should bind himself to levy no more by his own prerogative, on condition that the Commons assented to this arrangement, discharged the royal debt, and raised the royal revenue by a sum of two hundred thousand a year.

Such was the "great contract" with which Cecil met the Houses when they once more assembled in 1610. It was a bargain which the Commons must have been strongly tempted to accept; for heavy as were its terms it averted the great danger of arbitrary taxation, and again brought the monarchy into constitutional relations with Parliament. What hindered their acceptance of it was their suspicion of James. Purveyance and the Impositions were far from being the only grievance against which they came to protest; they had to complain of the increase of proclamations, the establishment of new and arbitrary courts of law, the encroachments of the spiritual jurisdiction; and consent to such a bargain, if it remedied two evils, would cut off all chance of redressing the rest. Were the treasury once full, no means remained of bringing the Crown to listen to their protest against the abuses of the Church, the silencing of godly ministers, the maintenance of pluralities and non-residence, the want of due training for the clergy. Nor had the Commons any mind to pass in silence over the illegalities of the preceding years. Whether they were to

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of the
Parliament.*

give legal sanction to the impositions or no, they were resolute to protest against their levy without sanction of law. James forbade them to enter on the subject, but their remonstrance was none the less vigorous. "Finding that your majesty, without advice or counsel of Parliament, hath lately in time of peace set both greater impositions and more in number than any of your noble ancestors did ever in time of war," they prayed, "that all impositions set without the assent of Parliament may be quite abolished and taken away," and that "a law be made to declare that all impositions set upon your people, their goods or merchandize, save only by common consent in Parliament, are and shall be void." As to Church grievances their demands were in the same spirit. They prayed that the deposed ministers might be suffered to preach, and that the jurisdiction of the High Commission should be regulated by statute; in other words, that ecclesiastical like financial matters should be taken out of the sphere of the prerogative and be owned as lying henceforth within the cognizance of Parliament.

It was no doubt the last demand that roused above all the anger of the King. As to some of the grievances he was ready to make concessions. He had consulted the judges as to the legality of his proclamations, and the judges had pronounced them illegal. It never occurred to James to announce his withdrawal from a claim which he now knew to be wholly against law, and he kept the opinion of the judges secret; but it made him ready to include the grievance of proclamations in his bargain with the Commons, if they would grant a larger subsidy. The question of the court of Wales he treated in the same temper. But on the question of the Church, of Church reform, or of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he would make no concession whatever. He had just wrought his triumph over the Scottish Kirk; and had succeeded, as he believed, in transferring the control of its spiritual life from the Scottish people to the Crown. He was not likely to

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consent to any reversal of such a process in England itself. The claim of the Commons had become at last a claim that England through its representatives in Parliament should have a part in the direction of its own religious affairs. Such a claim sprang logically from the very facts of the Reformation. It was by the joint action of the Crown and Parliament that the actual constitution of the English Church had been established; and it seemed hard to deny that the same joint action was operative for its after reform. But it was in vain that the Commons urged their claim. Elizabeth had done wisely in resisting it, for her task was to govern a half-Catholic England with a Puritan Parliament; and in spite of constitutional forms the Queen was a truer representative of national opinion in matters of religion than the House of Commons. In her later years all had changed; and the Commons who fronted her successor were as truly representative of the religious opinion of the realm as Elizabeth had been. But James saw no ground for changing the policy of the Crown. The control of the Church and through it of English religion lay within the sphere of his prerogative, and on this question he was resolute to make a stand. The Commons were as resolute as the King. The long and intricate bargaining came on both sides to an end; and in February, 1611, the first Parliament of James was dissolved.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAVOURITES.

1611—1625.

THE dissolution of the first Stuart Parliament marks a stage in our constitutional history. With it the system of the Tudors came to an end. The oneness of aim which had carried nation and government alike through the storms of the Reformation no longer existed. On the contrary the aims of the nation and the aims of the government were now in open opposition. The demand of England was that all things in the realm, courts, taxes, prerogatives, should be sanctioned and bounded by law. The policy of the King was to reserve whatever he could within the control of his personal will. James in fact was claiming a more personal and exclusive direction of affairs than any English sovereign that had gone before him. England, on the other hand, was claiming a greater share in its own guidance than it had enjoyed since the Wars of the Roses. Nor were the claims on either side speculative or theoretical. Differences in the theory of government or on the relative jurisdiction of Church and State might have been left as of old to the closet and the pulpit. But the opposition between the Crown and the people had gathered itself round practical questions, and round questions that were of interest to all. Every man's conscience was touched by the question of religion. Every man's pocket was touched by the question of taxation. The strongest among human impulses, the passion of religious

*England
and the
Crown.*

CHAP. IV. zeal and that of personal self-interest, nerved Englishmen to a struggle with the Crown. What gave the strife a yet more practical bearing was the fact that James had provided the national passion with a constitutional rallying-point. There was but one influence which could match the reverence which men felt for the Crown, and that was the reverence that men felt for the Parliament; nor had that reverence ever stood at a greater height than at the moment when James finally broke with the Houses. The dissolution of 1611 proclaimed to the whole people a breach between two powers which it had hitherto looked upon as one. Not only did it disperse to every corner of the realm a crowd of great landowners and great merchants who formed centres of local opposition to the royal system, but it carried to every shire and every borough the news that the Monarchy had broken with the Great Council of the realm.

*James
his own
minister.*

On Cecil his failure fell like a sentence of doom. Steeped as he was in the Tudor temper, he could not understand an age when the Tudor system had become impossible; the mood of the Commons and the mood of the King were alike unintelligible to him. He could see no ground for the failure of the Great Contract save that "God had not blessed it." But he had little time to wonder at the new forces which were rising about him, for only a year after the dissolution, in May, 1612, he died, killed by overwork. With him died the last check on the policy of James. So long as Cecil lived the Elizabethan tradition, weakened and broken as it might be, lived with him. In foreign affairs there was still the conviction that the Protestant states must not be abandoned in any fresh struggle with the House of Austria. In home affairs there was still the conviction that the national strength hung on the establishment of good-will between the nation and the Crown. But traditions such as these were no longer to hamper the policy of the King. To him Cecil's death seemed only to afford an opportunity for taking further

CHAP. IV. strides towards the establishment of a purely personal rule. For eight years James had borne with the check of a powerful minister. He was resolved now to have no real minister but himself. Cecil's amazing capacity for toil, as well as his greed of power, had already smoothed the way for such a step. The great statesman had made a political solitude about him. Of his colleagues some had been removed by death, some set aside by his jealousy. Raleigh lay in prison; Bacon could not find office under the Crown. And now that Cecil was removed, there was no minister whose character or capacity seemed to give him any right to fill his place. James could at last be his own minister. The treasury was put into commission. The post of secretary was left vacant, and it was announced that the King would be his own Secretary of State. Such an arrangement soon broke down, and the great posts of state were again filled with men of whose dependence James felt sure. But whoever might nominally hold these offices, from the moment of Cecil's death the actual direction of affairs was in the hands of the King.

Another constitutional check remained in the royal Council. As the influence of Parliament died down during the Wars of the Roses, that of the Council took to some extent its place. Composed as it was not only of ministers of the Crown but of the higher nobles and hereditary officers of state, it served under Tudor as under Plantagenet as an efficient check on the arbitrary will of the sovereign. Even the despotic temper of Henry VIII. had had to reckon with his council; it had checked act after act of Mary; it played a great part in the reign of Elizabeth. In the administrative tradition indeed of the last hundred years the council had become all important to the Crown. It brought it in contact with public opinion, less efficiently, no doubt, but more constantly than the Parliament itself; it gave to its acts an imposing sanction and assured to them a powerful support; above all it provided a body which stood at every crisis between the nation

*The
Council
set aside*

CHAP. IV. and the monarchy, which broke the shock of any conflict, and which could stand forth as mediator, should conflict arise, without any loss of dignity on the part of the sovereign. But to the practical advantages or to the traditional weight of such a body James was utterly blind. His cleverness made him impatient of its discussions; his conceit made him impatient of its control; while the foreign traditions which he had brought with him from a foreign land saw in the great nobles who composed it nothing but a possible force which might overawe the Crown. One of his chief aims therefore had been to lessen the influence of the council. So long as Cecil lived this was impossible, for the practical as well as the conservative temper of Cecil would have shrunk from so violent a change. But he was no sooner dead than James hastened to carry out his plans. The lords of the council found themselves of less and less account. They were practically excluded from all part in the government; and the whole management of affairs passed into the hands of the King or of the dependent ministers who from this time became mere agents of the King's will.

*The
Favourites.*

Such a personal rule as this, concentrating as it does the whole business of government in a single man, requires for its actual conduct the entire devotion of the ruler to public affairs. The work of Ferdinand of Aragon or of Frederick the Great was the work of galley-slaves. It was work which had broken down the strength of Wolsey, and which was to bow the iron frame of Oliver Cromwell. But James had no mind for work such as this. His intellect was quick, inventive, fruitful in device, eager to plan, and confident in the wisdom of its plans. But he had none of the quality which distinguishes intellectual power from mere cleverness, the capacity not only to plan, but to know what plans can actually be carried out, and by what means they can be carried out. Like all merely clever men, he looked down on the drudgery of details. The posts which he had held vacant were soon filled up; and

before many months were over James ceased to be his own Treasurer or his own Secretary of State. But he still claimed the absolute direction of all affairs; he was resolved to be his own chief minister. Even here however he felt the need of a more active and practical mood than his own for giving shape to the schemes with which his brain was fermenting; and he fell back as of old on the tradition of his house. It was so long since England had seen a favourite that the memory of Gaveston or De Vere had almost faded away. But favourites had been part of the system of the Scottish kings. Hemmed in by turbulent barons, unable to find counsellors among the nobles to whom the interests of the Crown were dearer than the interests of their class or their house, Stuart after Stuart had been driven to look for a counsellor and a minister in some dependant, bound to them by ties of personal attachment and of common danger. The Scotch nobles had dealt with such favourites after their manner. One they had hung, others they had stabbed; the last, David Rizzio, had fallen beneath their daggers at Mary's feet. But the notion of a personal dependant through whom his designs might take form for the outer world was as dear to James as to his predecessors, and the death of Cecil was soon followed by the appearance of favourites.

There was an æsthetic element in the character of the Stuarts which had shown itself in the poems and architectural skill of those who had gone before James, as it was to show itself in the artistic and literary taste of his successor. In James, grotesque as was his own personal appearance, it took the form of a passionate admiration of manly beauty. It is possible that with the fanciful Platonism of the time he saw in the grace of the outer form evidence of a corresponding fairness in the soul within. If so, he was egregiously deceived. The first favourite whom he raised to honour, a Scotch page named Carr, was as worthless as he was handsome. But his faults passed unheeded. Without a single claim to

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Carr.

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distinction save the favour of the King, Carr rose at a bound to honours which Elizabeth had denied to Raleigh and to Drake. He was enrolled among English nobles, and raised to the peerage as Viscount Rochester. Young as he was, he at once became sole minister. The lords of the council found themselves to be mere cyphers. "At the Council-table," writes the Spanish Ambassador only a year after Cecil's death, "the Viscount Rochester sheweth much temper and modesty without seeming to press or sway anything; but afterwards the King resolveth all business with him alone." So sudden and complete a revolution in the system of the state would have drawn ill-will on the favourite, even had Rochester shown himself worthy of the King's trust. But he seemed only eager to show his unworthiness. Through the year 1613 all England was looking on with wonder and disgust at his effort to break the marriage of Lord Essex with his wife, Frances Howard. Both had been young when they wedded; the passionate girl soon learned to hate her cold and formal husband; and she yielded readily enough to the seductions of the brilliant favourite. The guilty passion of the two was greedily seized on by the political intriguers of the court. Frances was daughter of a Howard, the Earl of Suffolk; and her father and uncle, the Earl of Northampton, who had already felt the influence of the favourite displacing their own, saw in the girl's shame a chance of winning this influence to their side. With this view they resolved to break the marriage with Essex, and to wed her to Rochester. A charge of impotency was trumped up against Essex as a ground of divorce, and a commission was named for its investigation. The charge was disproved, and with this disproof the case broke utterly down; but a fresh allegation was made that the Earl lay under a spell of witchcraft which incapacitated him from intercourse with his wife, though with her alone. The scandal grew as it became clear that the cause of Lady Essex was backed by the King. The resolute protest of

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Archbishop Abbot against the proceedings was met by a petulant scolding from James, and when the Commissioners were evenly divided in their judgement the King added two known partizans of the Countess to turn their verdict. By means such as these, after four months of scandal and shame, a sentence of divorce was at last procured, and Lady Essex set free to marry the favourite.

In the foul process of the divorce James had been either dupe or confederate. But throughout the same four months he had been either confederate or dupe in a more terrible tragedy. In his rise to greatness Rochester had been aided by the counsels of Sir Thomas Overbury. Overbury was a young man of singular wit and ability, but he had as few scruples as his master, and he was as ready to lend himself to the favourite's lust as to his ambition. He dictated for him in fact the letters which won the heart of Lady Essex. But if he backed the intrigue, he seems, from whatever cause, to have opposed the project of marriage. So great was his power over Rochester that the Howards deemed it needful to take him out of the way while the divorce was being brought about, and with this end they roused the King's jealousy of this influence over the favourite. James became as resolute to get rid of him as the Howards; he offered him an embassy if he would quit England, and when he refused, he treated his refusal as an offence against the state. Overbury was committed to the Tower, and he remained a close prisoner while the suit took its course. Whether more than imprisonment was designed by the Howards, or what was the part the two Earls played in the deeds that followed, is hard to tell. Still harder is it to tell the part of Rochester or of the King. But behind the web of political intrigue lay a woman's passion, and the part of Lady Essex is clear. Overbury had the secret of her shame to disclose, and she was resolved to silence him by death. A few days after the sentence of divorce was pronounced, he died in his prison, poisoned by her agents.

Overbury's
murder.

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The crime remained unknown; and not a whisper of it broke the King's exultation over his favourite's success. At the close of 1613 the scandal was crowned by the elevation of Rochester to the Earldom of Somerset and his union with Frances Howard. Murderess and adulteress as she was, the girl moved to her bridal through costly pageants which would have fitted the bridal of a Queen. The marriage was celebrated in the King's presence. Ben Jonson devised the wedding song. Bacon spent two thousand pounds in a wedding masque. The London Companies offered sumptuous gifts. James himself forced the Lord Mayor to entertain the bride with a banquet in Merchant Taylors' House, and the gorgeous wedding-train wound in triumph from Westminster to the City.

Immorality
of the
Court.

The shameless bridal was a fitting close to the shameless divorce, as both were outrages on the growing sense of morality. But they harmonized well enough with the profusion and profligacy of the Stuart Court. In spite of Cecil's economy, the treasury was drained to furnish masques and revels on a scale of unexampled splendour. While debts remained unpaid, land and jewels were lavished on young adventurers whose fair faces caught the royal fancy. Two years back Carr had been a penniless fortune-seeker. Now, though his ostensible revenues were not large, he was able to spend ninety thousand pounds in a single twelvemonths. The Court was as shameless as it was profuse. If the Court of Elizabeth was as immoral as that of her successor, its immorality had been shrouded by a veil of grace and chivalry. But no veil shrouded the degrading grossness of the Court of James. James was no drunkard, but he was a hard drinker, and with the people at large his hard drinking passed for drunkenness. When the Danish King visited England actors in a masque performed at Court were seen rolling intoxicated at his feet. The suit of Lady Essex had shown great nobles and officers of state content to play panders to their kinswoman. A yet more scandalous trial was soon to show

them in league with cheats and astrologers and poisoners. James had not shrunk from meddling busily in the divorce or from countenancing the bridal. Before scenes such as these the half-idolatrous reverence with which the sovereign had been regarded throughout the age of the Tudors died away into abhorrence and contempt. Court prelates might lavish their adulation on the virtues and wisdom of the Lord's anointed; but the players openly mocked at the King on the stage, while Puritans like Mrs. Hutchinson denounced the orgies of Whitehall in words as fiery as those with which Elijah denounced the profligacy of Jezebel.

But profligate and prodigal as was the Court, Somerset had to face the stern fact of an empty exchequer. The debt was growing steadily. It had now risen to seven hundred thousand pounds, while, in spite of the impositions, the annual deficit had mounted to two hundred thousand. The King had no mind to face the Parliament again; but a little experience of affairs had sobered the arrogance of the favourite, and there still remained counsellors of the same mind as Cecil, who pressed on him the need of reconciling the Houses with the Crown. What at last prevailed on the King were the pledges of some officious meddlers known as "undertakers" who promised to bring about the return to the House of Commons of a majority favourable to the demand of a subsidy. But pledges such as these fell dead before the general excitement which greeted the tidings of a new Parliament. Never had an election stirred so much popular passion as that of 1614. In every case where rejection was possible, the Court candidates were rejected. All the leading members of the country party, or as we should now term it, the Opposition, were again returned. But three hundred of the members were wholly new men; and among them we note for the first time the names of the leaders in the later struggle with the Crown. Calne returned John Pym; Yorkshire sent Thomas Wentworth; St. Germain's

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chose John Eliot. Signs of unprecedented excitement were seen in the vehement cheering and hissing which for the first time marked the proceedings of the Commons. But, excited as they were, their policy was precisely that of the Parliament which had been dissolved three years before. James indeed was farther off from any notion of concession than ever; he had no mind to offer again the Great Contract or even to allow the subject of impositions to be named. But the Parliament was as firm as the King. It refused to grant supplies till it had considered public grievances, and it fixed on the impositions and the abuses of the Church as the first grievances to be redressed. Unluckily the inexperience of the bulk of the House of Commons led it into quarrelling on a point of privilege with the Lords; and though the Houses had sate but two months James seized on the quarrel as a pretext for a fresh dissolution.

Benevolences.

The courtiers mocked at the "addled Parliament," but a statesman would have learned much from the anger and excitement that ran through its stormy debates. During the session the King had been frightened beyond his wont by the tone of the Commons, but the only impressions which remained in his mind were those of wounded pride and stubborn resistance. He sent four of the leading members of the Lower House to the Tower, and fell back on an obstinate resolve to govern without any Parliament at all. The resolve was carried recklessly out through the next seven years. The protests of the Commons James looked on as a defiance of the Crown, and he met them in a spirit of counter-defiance. The abuses which Parliament after Parliament had denounced were not only continued but carried to a greater extent than before. The spiritual courts were encouraged in fresh encroachments. Though the Crown lawyers admitted the illegality of proclamations they were issued in greater numbers than ever. Impositions were strictly levied. But a policy of defiance did little to fill the empty treasury. A large

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sum was gained by the sale to the Dutch of the towns which had been left by the States in pledge with Elizabeth; but even this supply was exhausted, and a fatal necessity drove James on to a formal and conscious breach of law. Whatever question might exist as to the legality of impositions, no question could exist since the statute of Richard the Third that benevolences were illegal. Nor was there any question that the levy of benevolences would rouse a deep and abiding resentment in the nation at large. Even in the height of the Tudor power Wolsey had been forced to abandon a resource which stirred England to revolt. But the Crown lawyers advised that while the statute forbade the exaction of loans it left the King free to ask for them; and James resolved to raise money by benevolences. At the close of the Parliament of 1614 therefore letters were sent out in the name of the Council demanding loans from the richer landowners. The letters remained generally unanswered; and in the autumn fresh letters had to be sent out in which the war which now threatened German Protestantism in the Palatinate was used to spur the loyalty of the country to a response. The judges on assize were ordered to press the King's demand. But prayer and pressure failed alike. In the three years which followed the dissolution the strenuous efforts of the sheriffs only raised sixty thousand pounds, a sum less than two-thirds of the value of a single subsidy. Devonshire, Nottinghamshire, and Warwickshire protested against the benevolences, and Somersetshire appealed to the statute which forbade them. It was in vain that the western remonstrants were silenced by threats from the Council, and that the laggard shires were rated for their sluggishness in payment. Two counties, those of Hereford and Stafford, sent not a penny to the last.

In his distress for money the King was driven to expedients which widened the breach between the gentry and the Crown. He had refused to part with the feudal rights which came down to him from the Middle Ages, such as

*Increase
of the
Peerage.*

CHAP. IV. his right to the wardship of young heirs and the marriage of heiresses. These were now recklessly used as a means of extortion. Similar abuses of the prerogative alienated the merchant class. London, the main seat of their trade and wealth, was growing fast; and its growth roused terror in the government. In 1611 a proclamation forbade any increase of buildings. But the proclamation remained inoperative till it was seized as a means of extortion. A Commission was issued in 1614 with power to fine all who had disobeyed the King's injunctions, and by its means a considerable sum was gathered into the treasury. All that remained to be done was to alienate the nobles, and this James succeeded in doing by a measure in which political design went hand in hand with the needs of his finance. The Tudors had watched the baronage with jealousy, but they had made no attempt to degrade it. The nobles were sent to the prison and the block, but their rank and honours remained dignities which the Crown was chary to bestow even on the noblest of its servants. During the forty-five years of her reign Elizabeth raised but seven persons to the peerage, and with the exception of Burleigh all of these were of historic descent. The number of lay peers indeed had hardly changed for two centuries; they were about fifty at the accession of Henry the Fifth and counted but sixty at the accession of James. In so small an assembly, where the Crown could count on the unwavering support of ministers, courtiers, and bishops, the royal influence had through the last hundred years been generally supreme. But among the lords of the "old blood," as those whose honours dated from as far back as the Plantagenets were called, there lingered a spirit of haughty independence which, if it had quailed before the Tudors, showed signs of bolder life now the Tudors had gone. It was the policy of James to raise up a new nobility more dependent on the court, a nobility that might serve as a bridle on the older lords, while the increase in the numbers of the baronage which their creation

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brought about lessened the weight which a peer had drawn from his special and unique position in the realm. Such a policy fell in with the needs of his treasury. Not only could he degrade the peerage by lavishing its honours, but he could degrade it yet more by putting them up to sale. Of the forty-five lay peers whom he added to the Upper House during his reign, a large number were created by sheer bargaining. Baronies were sold to bidders at ten thousand pounds a piece. Ten nobles were created in a batch. Peerages were given to the Scotch dependants whom James brought with him, to Hume and Hay, and Bruce and Ramsay, as well as to his favourites Carr and Villiers. Robartes, of Cornwall, a man who had risen to great wealth through the Cornish mines, complained that he had been forced to take a baronage, for which he had to pay ten thousand pounds to a favourite's use.

That this profuse creation of peers was more than the result of passing embarrassment was shown by its continuance under James' successors. Charles the First bestowed no less than fifty-six peerages; Charles the Second forty-eight. But in its immediate application it was no doubt little more than one of those financial shifts by which the King put off from day to day the necessity of again facing the one body which could permanently arrest his effort after despotic rule. There still however remained a body whose tradition was strong enough, if not to arrest, at any rate to check it. The lawyers had been subservient beyond all other classes to the Crown. Their narrow pedantry bent slavishly then, as now, before isolated precedents, while then, as now, their ignorance of general history hindered them from realizing the conditions under which these precedents had been framed, and to which they owed their very varying value. It was thus that the judges had been brought to support James in his case of the *Post-Nati* or in the levy of impositions. But beyond precedents even the judges refused to go. They had done their best in a case that came before them to

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The
dismissal
of Coke.

CHAP. IV. restrict the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts within legal and definite bounds, and their effort at once brought down on them the wrath of the King. All that affected the spiritual jurisdiction affected, he said, his prerogative; and whenever any case which affected his prerogative came before a court of justice he asserted that the King possessed an inherent right to be consulted as to the decision upon it. The judges timidly, though firmly, repudiated such a right as unknown to the law. To a King whose notions of law and of courts of law were drawn from those of Scotland, where justice had for centuries been a ready weapon in the royal hand, such a protest was utterly unintelligible. James sent for them to the royal closet. He rated them like schoolboys till they fell on their knees and with a single exception pledged themselves to obey his will. The one exception was the Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, a narrow-minded and bitter-tempered man, but of the highest eminence as a lawyer, and with a reverence for the law that overrode every other instinct. He had for some time been forced to evade the King's questions and 'closetings' on judicial cases by timely withdrawal from the royal presence. But now that he was driven to answer, he answered well. When any case came before him, he said he would act as it became a judge to act. Coke was at once dismissed from the council, and a provision which made the judicial office tenable at the King's pleasure, but which had long fallen into disuse, was revived to humble the common law in the person of its chief officer. In November, 1616, on the continuance of his resistance, he was deprived of his post of Chief Justice.

*The
Crown
and the
Law.*

No act of James seems to have stirred a deeper resentment among Englishmen than this announcement of his resolve to tamper with the course of justice. The firmness of Coke in his refusal to consult with the King on matters affecting his prerogative was justified by what immediately followed. As James interpreted the phrase,

to consult with the King meant simply to obey the King's bidding as to what the judgement of a court should be. In the case which was then at issue he summoned the judges simply to listen to his decision; and the judges promised to enforce it. The King's course was an outrage on the growing sense of law; but his success was not without useful results. In his zeal to assert his personal will as the source of all power, whether judicial or other, James had struck one of its most powerful instruments from the hands of the Crown. He had broken the spell of the royal courts. If the good sense of Englishmen had revolted against their decisions in favour of the prerogative, the English reverence for law had made men submit to them. But now that all show of judicial independence was taken away, and the judges debased into mere mouth-pieces of the King's will, the weight of their judgements came to an end. The nation had bent before their decision in favour of the Post-Nati; it had never a thought of bending before their decision in favour of Ship-money.

What an impassable gulf lay between the English conception of justice and that of James was shown even more vividly by the ruin of one who stood higher than Coke. At the opening of 1615 Somerset was still supreme. He held the rank of Lord Chamberlain; but he was practically the King's minister in state affairs, domestic or foreign. He was backed since his marriage by the influence of the Howards; and his father-in-law, Suffolk, was Lord Treasurer. He was girt round indeed by rivals and foes. The Queen was jealous of his influence over James; Archbishop Abbot dreaded his intrigues with Spain, intrigues which drew fresh meaning from the Catholic sympathies of the Howards; above all the older Lords of the Council, whom he ousted from any share in the government, watched eagerly for the moment when they hoped to regain their power by his fall. As he moved through the crowd of nobles he heard men

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muttering "that one man should not for ever rule them all." But Somerset's arrogance only grew with the danger. A new favourite was making way at court, and the King was daily growing colder. But Somerset only rated James for his coldness, demanded the dismissal of the new favourite, and refused to be propitiated by the King's craven apologies. His enemies however had a fatal card to play. In the summer whispers stole about of Overbury's murder, and of Somerset's part in it. The charge was laid secretly before the King, and a secret investigation conducted by his order threw darker and darker light on the story of guilt. Somerset was still unconscious of his peril, and the news that some meaner agents in the crime were arrested found him still with the King and in the seeming enjoyment of his wonted favour. He at once took horse for London to face his foes, and James parted from him with his usual demonstrations of affection. "He would neither eat nor drink," he said, "till he saw him again." He was hardly gone when James added, "I shall never see him more." His ruin in fact was already settled. In a few days he was a prisoner with his wife in the Tower; the agents in the fatal plot were sent to trial and to the gallows; and in May, 1616, the young Countess was herself brought before the Lord Steward's Court to avow her guilt. Somerset's daring nature made a more stubborn stand. He threatened the King with disclosures, we know not of what, and when arraigned denied utterly any share in the murder. All however was in vain; and he and the Countess were alike sentenced to death.

If ever justice called for the rigorous execution of the law, it was in the case of Frances Howard. Not only was the Countess a murderess, but her crime passed far beyond the range of common murders. Girl as she was when it was wrought, she had shown the coolness and deliberation of a practised assassin in her lust to kill. Chance foiled her efforts again and again, but she persisted for months, she changed her agents and her modes of

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death, till her victim was slain. Nor was her crime without profit. She gained by it all she wanted. The secret of her adultery was hidden. There was no one to reveal the perjuries of her divorce. Her ambition and her passion were alike gratified. She became the bride of the man she desired. Her kindred filled the court. Her husband ruled the King. If crime be measured by its relentless purpose, if the guilt of crime be heightened by its amazing success, then no woman that ever stood in the dock was a greater criminal than the wife of Rochester. Nor was this all. The wretched agents in her crime were sent pitilessly to the gallows. The guilt of two of them was at least technically doubtful, but the doubt was not suffered to interfere with their punishment. Only in the one case where no doubt existed, in the case of the woman who had spurred and bribed these tools to their crime, was punishment spared. If life was left to such a criminal, the hanging of these meaner agents was a murder. But this was the course on which James had resolved, and he had resolved on it from the first. There was no more pressure on him. The rivals of Somerset had no need for his blood. The councillors and the new favourite required only his ruin, and James himself was content with being freed from a dependent who had risen to be his master. His pride probably shrank from the shame which the public death of such criminals on such a charge might bring on himself and his crown; his good-nature pleaded for pity, and the claims of justice never entered his head. Before the trial began he had resolved that neither should die, and the sentence of the Earl and the Countess was soon commuted into that of an easy confinement during a few years in the Tower.

The fall of Somerset seemed to restore the old system of rule; and for a short time the Council regained somewhat of its influence. But when the Queen gave her aid in Somerset's overthrow she warned Archbishop Abbot that it was only the investiture of a new favourite with

CHAP. IV. Somerset's power. And a new favourite was already on the scene. It had only been possible indeed to overthrow the Earl by bringing a fresh face into the court. In the autumn of 1614 the son of a Leicestershire knight, George Villiers, presented himself to James. He was poor and friendless, but his personal beauty was remarkable, and it was by his beauty that he meant to make his way with the King. His hopes were soon realized. Queen, Primate, Councillors seized on the handsome youth to pit him against the favourite; in spite of Somerset's struggles he rose from post to post; and the Earl's ruin sealed his greatness. He became Master of the Horse; before the close of 1616 he was raised to the peerage as Viscount Villiers, and gifted with lands to the value of eighty thousand pounds. The next year he was Earl of Buckingham; in 1619 he was made Lord High Admiral; a marquisate and a dukedom raised him to the head of the English nobility. What was of far more import was the hold he gained upon the King. Those who had raised the handsome boy to greatness as a means of establishing their own power found themselves foiled. From the moment when Somerset entered the Tower, Villiers virtually took his place as Minister of State. The councillors soon found themselves again thrust aside. The influence of the new favourite surpassed that of his predecessor. The payment of bribes to him or marriage to his greedy kindred became the one road to political preferment. Resistance to his will was inevitably followed by dismissal from office. Even the highest and most powerful of the nobles were made to tremble at the nod of this young upstart.

His character.

"Never any man in any age, nor, I believe, in any country," says the astonished Clarendon in reviewing his strange career, "rose in so short a time to so much greatness of honour, power, or fortune, upon no other advantage or recommendation than of the beauty or gracefulness of his person." Such, no doubt, was the general explanation of his rise among men of the time; and it would have been

well had the account been true. The follies and profusion of a handsome minion pass lightly over the surface of a nation's life. Unluckily Villiers owed his fortune to other qualities besides personal beauty. He was amazingly ignorant, his greed was insatiate, his pride mounted to sheer midsummer madness. But he had no inconsiderable abilities. He was quick of wit and resolute of purpose; he shrank from no labour; his boldness and self-confidence faced any undertaking which was needful for the King's service; he was devoted, heart and soul, to the Crown. Over James his hold was that of a vehement and fearless temper over a mind infinitely better informed, infinitely more thoughtful and reflective, but vague and hesitating amidst all its self-conceit, crowded with theories and fancies, and with a natural bent to the unpractical and unreal. To such a mind the shallow, brilliant adventurer came as a relief. James found all his wise follies and politic moonshine translated for him into positive fact. He leant more and more heavily on an adviser who never doubted and was always ready to act. He drew strength from his favourite's self-confidence. Rochester had bent before greatness and listened more than once, even in the hour of his triumph, to the counsels of wiser men. But on the conceit of Villiers the warnings of Abbot, the counsels of Bacon, were lavished in vain. He saw no course but his own; and the showy, audacious temper of the man made that course always a showy and audacious one. It was this that made the choice of the new favourite more memorable than the choice of Carr. At a moment when conciliation and concession were most needed on the part of the Crown, the character of Villiers made concession and conciliation impossible. To James his new adviser seemed the weapon he wanted to smite with trenchant edge the resistance of the realm. He never dreamed that the haughty young favourite, on whose neck he loved to loll, and whose cheek he slobbered with kisses, was to drag down in his fatal career the throne of the Stuarts.

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CHAP. IV. As yet the temper of Villiers was as little known to the country as to the King. But the setting up of a new favourite on the ruin of the old had a significance which no Englishman could miss. It proved beyond question that the system of personal rule which was embodied in these dependent ministers was no passing caprice, but the settled purpose of the King. And never had such immense results hung on his resolve. Great as was the importance of the struggle at home, it was for a while to be utterly overshadowed by the greatness of the struggle which was opening abroad. The dangers which Cecil had foreseen in Germany were fast drawing to a head. Though he had failed to put England in a position to meet them, the dying statesman remained true to his policy. In 1612 he brought about a marriage between the King's daughter, Elizabeth, and the heir of the Elector Palatine, who was the leading prince in the Protestant Union. Such a marriage was a pledge that England would not tamely stand by if the Union was attacked; while the popularity of the match showed how keenly England was watching the dangers of German Protestantism, and how ready it was to defend it. But the step was hardly taken when Cecil's death left James free to pursue a policy of his own. The King was as anxious as his minister to prevent an outbreak of strife; and his daughter's bridal gave him a personal interest in the question. But he was far from believing with Cecil that the support of England was necessary for effective action. On the contrary, his quick, shallow intelligence held that it had found a way by which the Crown might at once exert weight abroad and be rendered independent of the nation at home. This was by a joint action with Spain. Weakened as were the resources of Spain by her struggle in the Netherlands, she was known to be averse from the opening of new troubles in Germany; and James might fairly reckon on her union with him in the work of peace. Her influence with the German branch of the House of Austria, as well as the weight her opinion had with every Catholic

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power, made her efforts even more important than those of James with the Calvinists. And that such a union could be brought about the King never doubted. His son was growing to manhood; and for years Spain had been luring James to a closer friendship by hints of the Prince's marriage with an Infanta. Such a match would not only gratify the pride of a sovereign, who in his earlier days in his little kingdom had been overawed by the great Catholic monarchy, and on whose imagination it still exercised a spell, but it would proclaim to the world the union of the powers in the work of peace, while it provided James with the means of action. For poor as Spain really was, she was still looked upon as the richest state in the world; and the King believed that the bride would bring with her a dowry of some half a million. Such a dowry would set him free from the need of appealing to his Parliament, and give him the means of acting energetically on the Rhine.

That there were difficulties in the way of such a policy, that Spain would demand concessions to the English Catholics, that the marriage would give England a Catholic queen, that the future heir of its crown must be trained by a Catholic mother, above all that the crown would be parted by plans such as these yet more widely from the sympathy of the nation, James could not but know. What he might have known as clearly, had he been a wise man instead of a merely clever man, was that, however such a bargain might suit himself, it was hardly likely to suit Spain. Spain was asked in effect to supply a bankrupt king with the means of figuring as the protector of Protestantism in Germany, while the only consideration offered to her was the hand of Prince Charles. But it never occurred to James to look at his schemes in any other light than his own. On the dissolution of the Parliament of 1614 he addressed a proposal of marriage to the Spanish court. Whatever was its ultimate purpose, Spain was careful to feed hopes which secured, so long as

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CHAP. IV. they lasted, better treatment for the Catholics, and which might be used to hold James from any practical action on behalf of the Protestants in Germany. Her cordiality increased as she saw, in spite of her protests, the crisis approaching. One member of the Austrian house, Ferdinand, had openly proclaimed and carried out his purpose of forcibly suppressing heresy in the countries he ruled, the Tyrol, Carinthia, Carniola, and Styria; and his succession to the childless Matthias in the rest of the Austrian dominions would infallibly be followed by a similar repression. To the Protestants of the Duchy, of Bohemia, of Hungary, therefore, the accession of Ferdinand meant either utter ruin or civil war, and a civil war would spread like wild-fire along the Danube to the Rhine. But Matthias was resolved on bringing about the recognition of Ferdinand as his successor; and Spain saw that the time was come for effectually fettering James. If troubles must arise, religion and policy at once dictated the use which Spain would have to make of them. She could not support heretics, and she had very good reasons for supporting their foes. The great aim of her statesmen was to hold what was left of the Low Countries against either France or the Dutch, and now that she had lost the command of the sea, the road overland from her Italian dominions along the Rhine through Franche Comté to the Netherlands was absolutely needful for this purpose. But this road led through the Palatinate; and if war was to break out Spain must either secure the Palatinate for herself or for some Catholic prince on whose good will she could rely. That the Dutch would oppose such a scheme was inevitable; but James alone could give fresh strength to the Dutch; and James could be duped into inaction by playing with his schemes for a marriage with the Infanta. In 1617 therefore negotiations for this purpose were formally opened between the courts of London and Madrid.

Raleigh's death.

Anger and alarm spread through England as the nation learned that James aimed at placing a Catholic queen

upon its throne. Even at the court itself the cooler heads of statesmen were troubled by this disclosure of the King's projects. The old tradition of Cecil's policy lingered among a powerful party which had its representatives among the royal ministers; and powerless as these were to influence the King's course, they still believed they could impede it. If by any means war could be stirred up between England and Spain the marriage-treaty would fall to ruin, and James be forced into union with the Protestants abroad and into some reconciliation with the Parliament at home. The wild project by which they strove to bring war about may have sprung from a brain more inventive than their own. Of the great statesmen and warriors of Elizabeth's day one only remained. At the opening of the new reign Sir Walter Raleigh had been convicted on a charge of treason; but though unpardoned the sentence was never carried out, and he had remained ever since a prisoner in the Tower. As years went by the New World, where he had founded Virginia and where he had gleaned news of a Golden City, threw more and more a spell over his imagination; and at this moment he disclosed to James his knowledge of a gold-mine on the Orinoco, and prayed that he might sail thither and work its treasures for the King. No Spanish settlement, he said, had been made there; and like the rest of the Elizabethans he took no heed of the Spanish claims to all lands in America, whether settled or no. The King was tempted by the bait of gold; but he had no mind to be tricked out of his friendship with Spain; he exacted a pledge against any attack on Spanish territory, and told Raleigh that the shedding of Spanish blood would cost him his head. The threat told little on a man who had risked his head again and again; who believed in the tale he told; and who knew that if war could be brought about between England and Spain a new career was open to him. He found the coast occupied by Spanish troops; and while evading direct orders to attack, he sent his men

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CHAP. IV. up the country. They plundered a Spanish town, found
 The no gold-mine, and soon came broken and defeated back.
 Favourites. Raleigh's son had fallen in the struggle; but, heart-broken
 1611- as he was by the loss and disappointment, the natural
 1625. daring of the man saw a fresh resource. He proposed to
 seize the Spanish treasure ships as he returned, to sail with
 their gold to England, and like Drake to turn the heads of
 nation and King by the immense spoil. But the temper
 of the buccaneers was now strange to English seamen; his
 men would not follow him; and he was brought home to
 face his doom. James at once put his old sentence in
 force; and the death of Raleigh on the scaffold atoned for
 the affront to Spain.

*The
 troubles in
 Bohemia.*

The failure of Raleigh came at a critical moment in
 German history. In 1617, while he was traversing the
 Southern seas, Ferdinand was presented by Matthias to
 the Diet of Bohemia, and acknowledged by it as successor
 to that kingdom. As had been foreseen, he at once began
 the course of forcible conversion to Catholicism which
 had been successful in his other dominions. But the
 Bohemian nobles were not men to give up their faith
 without a fight for it; and in May, 1618, they rose in
 revolt, flung Ferdinand's deputies out of the window of
 the palace at Prague, and called the country to arms.
 The long-dreaded crisis had come for Germany; but, as if
 with a foresight of the awful sufferings that the struggle
 was to bring, the Germans strove to look on it as a local
 revolt. The Lutheran princes longed only "to put the
 fire out;" the Calvinistic Union refused aid to the
 Bohemians; the Catholic League remained motionless.
 What partly accounted for the inaction of the Protestants
 was the ability of the Bohemians to hold their own. They
 were a match for all Ferdinand's efforts; through autumn
 and winter they held him easily at bay. In the spring
 of 1619 they even marched upon Vienna and all but
 surprized their enemy within his capital. But at this
 juncture the death of Matthias changed the face of affairs.

Ferdinand became master of the whole Austrian heritage
 in Germany, and he offered himself as candidate for the
 vacant Imperial crown. Union among the Protestants
 might have hindered his accession, and with it the terrible
 strife which he was to bring upon the Empire. But an in-
 sane quarrel between Lutherans and Calvinists paralyzed
 their efforts; and in August, 1619, Ferdinand became
 Emperor. Bohemia knew that its strength was insuffi-
 cient to check a foe such as this; and two days before his
 formal election to the Empire its nobles declared the realm
 vacant, and chose Frederick, the young Elector-Palatine, as
 their king.

Frederick accepted the crown; but he was no sooner
 enthroned at Prague than the Bohemians saw them-
 selves foiled in the hopes which had dictated their
 choice. They had trusted that Frederick's election would
 secure them support from the Calvinist Union, of which he
 was the leading member, and from James, whose daughter
 was his wife. But support from the Union was cut off
 by the jealousy of the French Government, which saw
 with suspicion the upgrowth of a great Calvinistic power,
 stretching from Bohemia to its own frontier, and pushing
 its influence through its relations with the Huguenot party
 into the very heart of France. James on the other hand
 was bitterly angered at Frederick's action. He could not
 recognize the right of subjects to depose a prince, or sup-
 port Bohemia in what he looked on as revolt, or Frederick
 in what he believed to be the usurpation of a crown. By
 envoy after envoy he called on his son-in-law to lay down
 his new royalty, and to return to the Palatinate. His re-
 fusals of aid to the Protestant Union helped the pressure
 of France in paralyzing its action, while he threatened war
 against Holland, the one power which was earnest in the
 Palatine's cause. It was in vain that in England both
 court and people were unanimous in a cry for war,
 or that Archbishop Abbot from his sick-bed implored
 James to strike one blow for Protestantism. James still

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*Outbreak
 of the
 Thirty
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 War.*

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called on Frederick to withdraw from Bohemia, and relied in such a case on the joint efforts of England and Spain for a re-establishment of peace. But no consent to his plans could be wrung from Frederick; and the spring of 1620 saw Spain ready to throw aside the mask. The time had come for securing her road to the Netherlands, as well as for taking her old stand as a champion of Catholicism. Rumours of her purpose had already stolen over the Channel, and James was brought at last to suffer Sir Horace Vere to take some English volunteers to the Palatinate. But the succour came too late. Spinola, the Spanish general in the Low Countries, was ordered to march to the aid of the Emperor; and the famous Spanish battalions were soon moving up the Rhine. Their march turned the local struggle in Bohemia into a European war: The whole face of affairs was changed as by enchantment. The hesitation of the Union was ended by the needs of self-defence; but it could only free its hands for action against the Spaniards by signing a treaty of neutrality with the Catholic League. The treaty sealed the fate of Bohemia. It enabled the army of the League under Maximilian of Bavaria to march down the valley of the Danube; Austria was forced to submit unconditionally to Ferdinand; and in August, as Spinola reached the frontier of the Palatinate, the joint army of Ferdinand and the League prepared to enter Bohemia.

The
Parliament
of 1621.

On James the news of these events burst like a thunderbolt. He had been duped; and for the moment he bent before the burst of popular fury which the danger to German Protestantism called forth throughout the land. The cry for a Parliament, the necessary prelude to a war, overpowered the King's secret resistance; and the Houses were again called together. But before they could meet the game of Protestantism was lost. Spinola beat the troops of the Union back upon Worms, and occupied with ease the bulk of the Palatinate. On the 8th of November the army of the League forced Frederick to battle before

the walls of Prague; and before the day was over he was galloping off, a fugitive, to North Germany. Such was the news that met the Houses on their assembly at Westminster in January, 1621. The instinct of every Englishman told him that matters had now passed beyond the range of mediation or diplomacy. Armies were moving, fierce passions were aroused, schemes of vast ambition and disturbance were disclosing themselves; and at such a moment the only intervention possible was an intervention of the sword. The German princes called on James to send them an army. "The business is gone too far to be redressed with words only," said the Danish King, who was prepared to help them. "I thank God we hope, with the help of his Majesty of Great Britain and the rest of our friends, to give unto the Count Palatine good conditions. If ever we are to do any good for the liberty of Germany and religion now is the time." But this appeal met offers of "words only" and Denmark withdrew from the strife in despair. James in fact was as confident in his diplomatic efforts as ever; but even he saw at last that they needed the backing of some sort of armed force, and it was to procure this backing that he called for supplies from the Parliament.

The Commons were bitterly chagrined. They had come together, trusting that their assembly meant such an attitude on the part of the Crown as would have rallied the Protestants of Germany round England, and have aided the enterprise of the Dane. Above all they hoped for war with the power which had at once turned the strife to its own profit, whose appearance in the Palatinate had broken the strength of German Protestantism, and set the League free to crush Frederick at Prague. They found only demands for supplies, and a persistence in the old efforts to patch up a peace. Fresh envoys were now labouring to argue the Emperor into forgiveness of Frederick, and to argue the Spaniards into an evacuation of Frederick's dominions. With such aims not only was no war against

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*Inpeachment
of the
monopolists.*

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the Spaniard to be thought of, but his good will must be sought by granting permission for the export of arms from England to Spain. The Commons could only show their distrust of such a policy by a small vote of supplies and refusal of further aid in the future. But if their resentment could find no field in foreign affairs, it found a field at home. The most crying constitutional grievance arose from the revival of monopolies, in spite of the pledge of Elizabeth to suppress them. To the Crown they brought little profit; but they gratified the King by their extension of the sphere of his prerogative, and they put money into the pockets of his greedy dependents. A parliamentary right which had slept ever since the reign of Henry the Sixth, the right of the Lower House to impeach great offenders at the bar of the Lords, was revived against the monopolists; and James was driven by the general indignation to leave them to their fate. But the practice of monopolies was only one sign of the corruption of the court. Sales of peerages, sales of high offices of State, had raised a general disgust; and this disgust showed itself in the impeachment of the highest among the officers of State.

*Fall of
Bacon.*

At the accession of James the rays of royal favour, so long looked for in vain, had broken slowly upon Francis Bacon. He became successively Solicitor and Attorney-General; the year of Shakspeare's death saw him called to the Privy Council; he verified Elizabeth's prediction by becoming Lord Keeper. At last the goal of his ambition was reached. He had attached himself to the rising fortunes of Buckingham, and in 1618 the favour of Buckingham made him Lord Chancellor. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Verulam, and created, at a later time, Viscount St. Albans. But the nobler dreams for which these meaner honours had been sought escaped Bacon's grasp. His projects still remained projects, while to retain his hold on office he was stooping to a miserable compliance with the worst excesses of Buckingham

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and his master. The years during which he held the Chancellorship were, in fact, the most disgraceful years of a disgraceful reign. They saw the execution of Raleigh, the sacrifice of the Palatinate, the exaction of benevolences, the multiplication of monopolies, the supremacy of Buckingham. Against none of the acts of folly and wickedness which distinguished James's government did Bacon do more than protest; in some of the worst, and above all in the attempt to coerce the judges into prostrating the law at the King's feet, he took a personal part. But even his protests were too much for the young favourite, who regarded him as the mere creature of his will. It was in vain that Bacon flung himself on the Duke's mercy, and begged him to pardon a single instance of opposition to his caprice. A Parliament was impending, and Buckingham resolved to avert from himself the storm which was gathering by sacrificing to it his meaner dependents.

To ordinary eyes the Chancellor was at the summit of human success. Jonson had just sung of him as one "whose even thread the Fates spin round and full out of their choicest and their whitest wool" when the storm burst. The Commons charged Bacon with corruption in the exercise of his office. It had been customary among Chancellors to receive gifts from successful suitors after their suit was ended. Bacon, it is certain, had taken such gifts from men whose suits were still unsettled; and though his judgement may have been unaffected by them, the fact of their reception left him with no valid defence. He at once pleaded guilty to the charge. "I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence. I beseech your Lordships," he added, "to be merciful to a broken reed." Though the heavy fine laid on him was remitted by the Crown, he was deprived of the Great Seal and declared incapable of holding office in the State or sitting in Parliament. Fortunately for his after fame Bacon's life was not to close in this cloud of shame. His fall restored him to that position of real

CHAP. IV. greatness from which his ambition had so long torn him away. "My conceit of his person" says Ben Jonson "was never increased towards him by his place or honours. But I have and do reverence him for his greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever by his work one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want." Bacon's intellectual activity was never more conspicuous than in the last four years of his life. He began a digest of the laws and a history of England under the Tudors, revised and expanded his essays, and dictated a jest-book. He had presented "Novum Organum" to James in the year before his fall; in the year after it he produced his "Natural and Experimental History." Meanwhile he busied himself with experiments in physics which might carry out the principles he was laying down in these works; and it was while studying the effect of cold in preventing animal putrefaction that he stopped his coach to stuff a fowl with snow and caught the fever which ended in his death.

*James
clings to
Spain.*

James was too shrewd to mistake the importance of Bacon's impeachment; but the hostility of Buckingham to the Chancellor, and Bacon's own confession of his guilt, made it difficult to resist his condemnation. Energetic too as its measures were against corruption and monopolists, the Parliament respected scrupulously the King's prejudices in other matters; and even when checked by an adjournment, resolved unanimously to support him in any earnest effort for the Protestant cause. A warlike speech from a member at the close of the session in June roused an enthusiasm which recalled the days of Elizabeth. The Commons answered the appeal by a unanimous vote, "lifting their hats as high as they could hold them," that for the recovery of the Palatinate they would adventure their fortunes, their estates, and their lives. "Rather this declaration," cried a leader of the country party when it was read by the

Speaker, "than ten thousand men already on the march." For the moment indeed the energetic declaration seemed to give vigour to the royal policy. James had aimed throughout at the restitution of Bohemia to Ferdinand, and at inducing the Emperor, through the mediation of Spain, to abstain from any retaliation on the Palatinate. He now freed himself for a moment from the trammels of diplomacy, and enforced a cessation of the attack on his son-in-law's dominions by a threat of war. The suspension of arms lasted through the summer of 1621; but threats could do no more. Frederick still refused to make the concessions which James pressed on him, and the army of the League advancing from Bohemia drove the forces of the Elector out of the upper or eastern portion of the Palatinate. Again the general restoration which James was designing had been thrown further back than ever by a Catholic advance; but the King had no mind to take up the challenge. He was only driven the more on his old policy of mediation through the aid of Spain. An end was put to all appearance of hostilities. The negotiations for the marriage with the Infanta, which had never ceased, were pressed more busily. Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, who had become all-powerful at the English Court, was assured that no effectual aid should be sent to the Palatinate. The English fleet, which was cruising by way of menace off the Spanish coast, was called home. The King dismissed those of his ministers who still opposed a Spanish policy; and threatened on trivial pretexts a war with the Dutch, the one great Protestant power that remained in alliance with England, and was ready to back the Elector.

But he had still to reckon with his Parliament; and the first act of the Parliament on its re-assembling in November was to demand a declaration of war with Spain. The instinct of the nation was wiser than the statecraft of the King. Ruined and enfeebled as she really was, Spain to the world at large still seemed the

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*Dissolution
of the
Parliament.*

CHAP. IV. champion of Catholicism. It was the entry of her troops into the Palatinate which had widened the local war in Bohemia into a struggle for the suppression of Protestantism along the Rhine; above all it was Spanish influence, and the hopes held out of a marriage of his son with a Spanish Infanta, which were luring the King into his fatal dependence on the great enemy of the Protestant cause. But the Commons went further than a demand for war. It was impossible any longer to avoid a matter so perilous to English interests, and in their petition the Houses coupled with their demands for war the demand of a Protestant marriage for their future King. Experience proved in later years how dangerous it was for English freedom that the heir to the Crown should be brought up under a Catholic mother; but James was beside himself at the presumption of the Commons in dealing with mysteries of State. "Bring stools for the Ambassadors," he cried in bitter irony as their committee appeared before him. He refused the petition, forbade any further discussion of State policy, and threatened the speakers with the Tower. "Let us resort to our prayers," a member said calmly as the King's letter was read, "and then consider of this great business." The temper of the House was seen in a Protestation with which it met the royal command to abstain from discussion. It resolved "That the liberties, franchises, privileges, and jurisdictions of Parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England; and that the arduous and urgent affairs concerning the King, State, and defence of the realm, and of the Church of England, and the making and maintenance of laws, and redress of grievances, which daily happen within this realm, are proper subjects and matter of council and debate in Parliament. And that in the handling and proceeding of those businesses every member of the House hath, and of right ought to have, freedom of speech to propound, treat, reason, and bring to conclusion the same." The King answered the

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Protestation by a characteristic outrage. He sent for the Journals of the House, and with his own hand tore out the pages which contained it. "I will govern," he said, "according to the common weal, but not according to the common will." A few days after, on the nineteenth of December, he dissolved the Parliament.

"It is the best thing that has happened in the interests of Spain and of the Catholic religion since Luther began preaching," wrote the Count of Gondomar to his master, in his joy that all danger of war had passed away. "I am ready to depart," Sir Henry Savile on the other hand murmured on his death-bed, "the rather that having lived in good times I foresee worse." In the obstinacy with which he clung to his Spanish policy James stood indeed absolutely alone; for not only the old nobility and the statesmen who preserved the tradition of the age of Elizabeth, but even his own ministers, with the exception of Buckingham and the Treasurer, Cranfield, were at one with the Commons in their distrust of Spain. But James persisted in his plans. By the levy of a fresh benevolence he was able to keep Vere's force on foot for a few months while his diplomacy was at work in Germany and at Madrid. The Palatinate indeed was lost in spite of his despatches; but he still trusted to bring about its restitution to the Elector through his influence with Spain. It was to secure this influence that he pressed for a closer union with the great Catholic power. What really bound him to such a foreign policy was his policy at home. If James cared for the restoration of the Palatinate he cared more for the system of government he had carried out since 1610; and with that system, as he well knew, Parliaments were incompatible. But a policy of war would at once throw him on the support of Parliaments; and the experience of 1621 had shown him at what a price that support must be bought. From war too, as from any policy which implied a decided course of action, the temper of James shrank. What he clung to was a co-operation with Spain in which the burden

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Spain
holds
back.

CHAP. IV. of enforcing peace on the German disputants should fall exclusively on that power. Of such a co-operation the marriage of his son Charles with the Infanta, which had so long been held out as a lure to his vanity, was to be the sign. But the more James pressed for this consummation of his projects, the more Spain held back. She too was willing to co-operate with James so long as such a co-operation answered her own purposes. Her statesmen had not favoured the war in Germany; even now they were willing to bring it to a close by the restoration of the Palatinate. But they would not abandon the advantages which the war had given to Catholicism; and their plan was to restore the Palatinate not to Frederick but to his son, and to bring up that son as a Catholic at Vienna. Of such a simple restoration of the religious and political balance in the Empire as James was contemplating, the statesmen of Madrid thought no more than they thought of carrying out the scheme of a marriage with his son. Spain had already gained all she wanted from the marriage-negotiations. They had held James from action; they had now made action even less possible by supplying a fresh ground of quarrel with the House of Commons. Had the match been likely to secure the conversion of England, or even a thorough toleration for Catholics, it might have been possible to consent to the union of a Spanish princess with a heretic. But neither result seemed probable: and the Spanish Court saw no gain in such a union as would compensate it for the loss of the Palatinate or the half-million which James counted on as the dowry of the bride.

*End of
the
Spanish
marriage.*

But the more Spain hung back the hotter grew the impatience of Buckingham and James. At last the young favourite proposed to force the Spaniard's hand by the appearance of Prince Charles himself at Madrid. To the wooer in person Buckingham believed Spain would not dare to refuse either Infanta or Palatinate. James was too shrewd to believe in such a delusion, but in spite of his opposition the Prince quitted England in disguise in

1623, and at the beginning of March he appeared with Buckingham at Madrid to claim his promised bride. It was in vain that the Spanish Court rose in its demands; for every new demand was met by fresh concessions on the part of England. The abrogation of the penal laws against the worship of Catholics in private houses, a Catholic education for the Prince's children, a Catholic household for the Infanta, the erection of a Catholic church for her at Court, to which access should be free for all comers, were stipulations no sooner asked than they were granted. "We are building a chapel to the devil," said James when the last condition was laid before him; but he swore to the treaty and forced his councillors to swear to it. The marriage, however, was no nearer than before. The one thing which would have made it possible was a conversion of Charles to Catholicism; and though the Prince listened silently to arguments on the subject he gave no sign of becoming a Catholic. The aim of the Spanish ministers was to break off the match without a quarrel. They could only throw themselves on a policy of delay, and with this view the court theologians decided that the Infanta must in any case stay in Spain for a year after its conclusion till the conditions were fully carried out. Against such a condition Charles remonstrated in vain. And meanwhile the influence of the new policy on the war in Germany was hard to see. The Catholic League and its army under the command of Count Tilly won triumph after triumph over their divided foes. The reduction of Heidelberg and Mannheim completed the conquest of the Palatinate, whose Elector fled helplessly to Holland, while his Electoral dignity was transferred by the Emperor to the Duke of Bavaria. But there was still no sign of the hoped-for intervention on the part of Spain. At last the pressure of Charles on the subject of the Palatinate brought about a disclosure of the secret of Spanish policy. "It is a maxim of state with us," the

CHAP. IV. Duke of Olivarez confessed, as the Prince demanded an energetic interference in Germany, "that the King of Spain must never fight against the Emperor. We cannot employ our forces against the Emperor." "If you hold to that," replied the Prince, "there is an end of all." Quitting Madrid he found a fleet at Santander, and on the fifth of October he again landed with Buckingham on the shores of England.

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Prince
Charles.

His return was the signal for a burst of national joy. All London was alight with bonfires in her delight at the failure of the Spanish match, and of the collapse, humiliating as it was, of a policy which had so long trailed English honour at the chariot-wheels of Spain. War seemed at last inevitable; for not only did James's honour call for some effort to win back the Palatinate for his daughter's children, but the resentment of Charles and Buckingham was ready to bear down any reluctance of the King. From the moment of their return indeed the direction of English affairs passed out of the hands of James into those of the favourite and the Prince. Charles started on his task of government with the aid of a sudden burst of popularity. To those who were immediately about him the journey to Madrid had revealed the strange mixture of obstinacy and weakness in the Prince's character, the duplicity which lavished promises because it never purposed to be bound by any, the petty pride that subordinated every political consideration to personal vanity or personal pique. Charles had granted demand after demand till the very Spaniards lost faith in his concessions. With rage in his heart at the failure of his efforts, he had renewed his betrothal on the very eve of his departure only that he might insult the Infanta by its contemptuous withdrawal as soon as he was safe at home. But to England at large the baser features of his character were still unknown. The stately reserve, the personal dignity and decency of manners which distinguished the Prince, contrasted favourably with the gabble and

indecorum of his father. The courtiers indeed who saw him in his youth would often pray God that "he might be in the right way when he was set; for if he were in the wrong he would prove the most wilful of any king that ever reigned." But the nation was willing to take his obstinacy for firmness; as it took the pique which inspired his course on the return from Spain for patriotism and for the promise of a nobler rule.

At the back of Charles stood the favourite Buckingham. The policy of James had recoiled upon its author. In raising his favourites to the height of honour James had looked to being at last an independent king. He had broken with parliaments, he had done away with the old administrative forms of government, that his personal rule might act freely through these creatures of his will. And now that his policy had reached its end, his will was set aside more ruthlessly than ever by the very instrument he had created to carry it out. In his zeal to establish the greatness of the monarchy he had brought on the monarchy a humiliation such as it had never known. Church, or Baronage, or Commons had many times in our history forced a king to take their policy for his own; but never had a mere minister of the Crown been able to force his policy on a king. This was what Buckingham set himself to do. The national passion, the Prince's support, his own quick energy, bore down the hesitation and reluctance of James. The King still clung desperately to peace. He still shrank from parliaments. But Buckingham overrode every difficulty. In February, 1624, James was forced to meet a Parliament, and to concede the point on which he had broken with the last by laying before it the whole question of the Spanish negotiation. Buckingham and the Prince gave their personal support to a demand of the Houses for a rupture of the treaties with Spain and a declaration of war. A subsidy was eagerly voted; and as if to mark a new departure in the policy of the Stuarts, the persecution of the Catholics,

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The
Parliament
of 1624.

CHAP. IV. which had long been suspended out of deference to Spanish intervention, began with new vigour. The favourite gave a fresh pledge of his constitutional aims by consenting to a new attack on a minister of the Crown. The Lord Treasurer, Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, had done much by his management of the finances to put the royal revenues on a better footing. But he was the head of the Spanish party; and he still urged the King to cling to Spain and to peace. Buckingham and Charles therefore looked coldly on while he was impeached for corruption and dismissed from office.

Buckingham's plans.

Though James was swept along helplessly by the tide, his shrewdness saw clearly the turn that affairs were taking; and it was only by hard pressure that the favourite succeeded in wresting his consent to Cranfield's disgrace. "You are making a rod for your own back," said the King. But Buckingham and Charles persisted in their plans of war. That these were utterly different from the plans of the Parliament troubled them little. What money the Commons had granted, they had granted on condition that the war should be exclusively a war against Spain, and a war waged as exclusively by sea. Their good sense shrank from plunging into the tangled and intricate medley of religious and political jealousies which was turning Germany into a hell. What they saw to be possible was to aid German Protestantism by lifting off it the pressure of the armies of Spain. That Spain was most assailable on the sea the ministers at Madrid knew as well as the leaders of the Commons. What they dreaded was not a defeat in the Palatinate, but the cutting off of their fleets from the Indies and a war in that new world which they treasured as the fairest flower of their crown. A blockade of Cadiz or a capture of Hispaniola would have produced more effect at the Spanish council-board than a dozen English victories on the Rhine. But such a policy had little attraction for Buckingham. His flighty temper exulted in being the arbiter of Europe, in weaving fanciful alliances, in

marshalling imaginary armies. A treaty was concluded with Holland, and negotiations set on foot with the Lutheran princes of North Germany, who had looked coolly on at the ruin of the Elector Palatine, but were scared at last into consciousness of their own danger. Yet more important negotiations were opened for an alliance with France. To restore the triple league of France, England, and Holland was to restore the system of Elizabeth. Such a league would in fact have been strong enough to hold in check the House of Austria and save German Protestantism, while it would have hindered France from promoting and profiting by German disunion, as it did under Richelieu. But, as of old, James could understand no alliance that rested on merely national interests. A dynastic union seemed to him the one sure basis for joint action; and the plan for a French alliance became a plan for marriage with a French princess.

The plan suited the pride of Charles and of Buckingham. But the first whispers of it woke opposition in the Commons. They saw the danger of a Roman Catholic queen. They saw yet more keenly the danger of pledges of toleration given to a foreign government, pledges which would furnish it with continual pretexts for interfering in the civil government of the country. Such an interference would soon breed on either side a mood for war. Before making these grants therefore they had called for a promise that no such pledges should be given, and as a subsidy hung on his consent James had solemnly promised this. But it was soon found that France was as firm on this point as Spain; and that toleration for the Catholics was a necessary condition of any marriage-treaty. The pressure of Buckingham and Charles was again brought to bear upon the King. The promise was broken and the marriage-treaty was signed. Its difficulties were quick to disclose themselves. It was impossible to call Parliament again together at winter tide, while such perfidy was fresh; and the subsidies, which had been counted

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French
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CHAP. IV. on, could not be asked for. But a hundred schemes
 The were pushed busily on ; and twelve thousand English-
 Favourites. men were gathered under an adventurer, Count Mansfield,
 1611- to march to the Rhine. They reached Holland only to
 1625. find themselves without supplies and to die of famine
 and disease.

Death of
 James.

If the blow fell lightly on the temper of the favourite, it fell heavily on the King. James was already sinking to the grave, and in the March of 1625 he died with the consciousness of failure. Even his sanguine temper was broken at last. He had struggled with the Parliament, and the Parliament was stronger than ever. He had broken with Puritanism, and England was growing more Puritan every day. He had claimed for the Crown authority such as it had never known, and the Commons had impeached and degraded his ministers. He had raised up dependants to carry out a purely personal rule, and it was a favourite who was now treading his will under foot. He had staked everything on his struggle with English freedom, and the victory of English freedom was well-nigh won. James had himself destroyed that enthusiasm of loyalty which had been the main strength of the Tudor throne. He had disenchanted his people of their blind faith in the monarchy by a policy both at home and abroad which ran counter to every national instinct. He had alienated alike the noble, the gentleman, and the trader. In his feverish desire for personal rule he had ruined the main bulwarks of the monarchy. He had destroyed the authority of the council. He had accustomed men to think lightly of the ministers of the crown, to see them browbeaten by favourites, and driven from office for corruption. He had degraded the judges and weakened the national reverence for their voice as an expression of law. He had turned the Church into a mere engine for carrying out the royal will. And meanwhile he had raised up in the very face of the throne a power which was strong enough to cope with it. He had quarrelled with and

insulted the Houses as no English sovereign had ever done before ; and all the while the authority he boasted of was passing without his being able to hinder it to the Parliament which he outraged. There was shrewdness as well as anger in his taunt at its "ambassadors." A power had at last risen up in the Commons with which the monarchy was to reckon. In spite of the king's petulant outbreaks Parliament had asserted with success its exclusive right of taxation. It had suppressed monopolies. It had reformed abuses in the courts of law. It had impeached and driven from office the highest ministers of the crown. It had asserted its privilege of freely discussing all questions connected with the welfare of the realm. It had claimed to deal with the question of religion. It had even declared its will on the sacred "mystery" of foreign policy. The utter failure of the schemes of James at home can only be realized by comparing the attitude of the Houses at his death with their attitude during the last years of Elizabeth. Nor was his failure less abroad than at home. He had found England among the greatest of European powers. He had degraded her into a satellite of Spain. And now from a satellite he had dropped to the position of a dupe. In one plan alone could he believe himself successful. If his son had missed the hand of a Spanish Infanta, he had gained the hand of a daughter of France. But the one success of James was the most fatal of all his blunders ; for in the marriage with Henrietta Maria lay the doom of his race. It was the fierce and despotic temper of the Frenchwoman that was to nerve Charles more than all to his fatal struggle against English liberty. It was her bigotry—as the Commons foresaw—that undermined the Protestantism of her sons. It was when the religious and the political temper of Henrietta mounted the throne in James the Second that the full import of the French marriage was seen in the downfall of the Stuarts.

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 The
 Favourites.
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CHAPTER V.

CHARLES I. AND THE PARLIAMENT.

1625—1629.

*Charles
the First.*

HAD Charles mounted the throne on his return from Spain his accession would have been welcomed by a passionate burst of enthusiasm. He had aired himself as a staunch Protestant who had withstood Catholic seductions, and had come to nerve his father to a policy at one with the interests of religion and with the national will. But the few months that had passed since the last session of Parliament had broken the spell of this heroic attitude. The real character of the part which Charles had played in Spain was gradually becoming known. It was seen that he had been as faithless to Protestantism as his revenge had made him faithless to the Infanta. Nor had he shown less perfidy in dealing with England itself. In common with his father, he had promised that his marriage with a princess of France should in no case be made conditional on the relaxation of the penal laws against the Catholics. It was suspected, and the suspicion was soon to be changed into certainty, that in spite of this promise such a relaxation had been stipulated, and that a foreign power had again been given the right of intermeddling in the civil affairs of the realm. The general distrust of the new King was intensified by the conduct of the war. In granting its subsidies the Parliament of 1624 had restricted them to the purposes of a naval war, and that a war with Spain. It had done this after discussing and rejecting the wider schemes of

the favourite for an intervention of England by land in the war of the Palatinate. But the grants once made, Buckingham's plans had gone on without a check. Alliances had been formed, subsidies promised to Denmark, and twelve thousand men actually despatched to join the armies on the Rhine. It was plain that the policy of the Crown was to be as unswayed by the will of the nation as in the days of King James. What it was really to be swayed by was the self-sufficient incapacity of the young favourite.

A few months of action had shown Buckingham to England as he really was, vain, flighty, ingenious, daring, a brilliant but shallow adventurer, without political wisdom or practical ability, as little of an administrator as of a statesman. While projects without number were seething and simmering in his restless brain, while leagues were being formed and armies levied on paper, the one practical effort of the new minister had ended in the starvation of thousands of Englishmen on the sands of Holland. If English policy was once more to become a real and serious thing, it was plain that the great need of the nation was the dismissal of Buckingham. But Charles clung to Buckingham more blindly than his father had done. The shy reserve, the slow stubborn temper of the new King found relief in the frank gaiety of the favourite, in his rapid suggestions, in the defiant daring with which he set aside all caution and opposition. James had looked on Buckingham as his pupil. Charles clung to him as his friend. Nor was the new King's policy likely to be more national in Church affairs than in affairs of state. The war had given a new impulse to religious enthusiasm. The patriotism of the Puritan was strengthening his bigotry. To the bulk of Englishmen a fight with Spain meant a fight with Catholicism; and the fervour against Catholicism without roused a corresponding fervour against Catholicism within the realm. To Protestant eyes every English Catholic seemed a traitor at home, a traitor who

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*The
King's
policy.*

CHAP. V. must be watched and guarded against as the most dangerous of foes. A Protestant who leant towards Catholic usage or Catholic dogma was yet more formidable. To him men felt as towards a secret traitor in their own ranks. But it was to men with such leanings that Charles seemed disposed to show favour. Bishop Laud was recognized as the centre of that varied opposition to Puritanism, whose members were loosely grouped under the name of Arminians; and Laud now became the King's adviser in ecclesiastical matters. With Laud at its head the new party grew in boldness as well as numbers. It naturally sought for shelter for its religious opinions by exalting the power of the Crown; and its union of political error with theological heresy seemed to the Puritan to be at last proclaimed to the world when Montague, a court chaplain, ventured to slight the Reformed Churches of the Continent in favour of the Church of Rome, and to advocate in his sermon the Real Presence in the Sacrament and a divine right in kings.

*The
Parliament
of 1625.*

The Houses had no sooner met in the May of 1625 than their temper in religious matters was clear to every observer. "Whatever mention does break forth of the fears and dangers in religion and the increase of Popery," wrote a member who was noting the proceedings of the Commons, "their affections are much stirred." The first act of the Lower House was to summon Montague to its bar and to commit him to prison. In their grants to the Crown they showed no ill-will indeed, but they showed caution. They suspected that the pledge of making no religious concessions to France had been broken. They knew that the conditions on which the last subsidy had been granted had been contemptuously set aside. In his request for a fresh grant Charles showed the same purpose of carrying out his own policy without any regard for the national will by simply asking for supplies for the war without naming a sum or giving any indication of what war it was to support. The reply of the Commons was to grant a hundred and forty

thousand pounds. A million would hardly cover the King's engagements, and Charles was bitterly angered. He was angered yet more by the delay in granting the permanent revenue of the Crown. The Commons had no wish to refuse their grant of tonnage and poundage, or the main customs duties, which had ever since Edward the Fourth's day been granted to each new sovereign for his life. But the additional impositions laid by James on these duties required further consideration, and to give time for a due arrangement of this vexed question the grant of the customs was made for a year only. But the limitation at once woke the jealousy of Charles. He looked on it as a restriction of the rights of the Crown, refused to accept the grant on such a condition, and adjourned the Houses. When they met again at Oxford it was in a sterner temper, for Charles had shown his defiance of Parliament by drawing Montague from prison, by promoting him to a royal chaplaincy, and by levying the disputed customs without authority of law. "England," cried Sir Thomas Phillips, "is the last monarchy that yet retains her liberties. Let them not perish now." But the Commons had no sooner announced their resolve to consider public grievances before entering on other business than they were met in August by a dissolution.

To the shallow temper of Buckingham the cautious firmness of the Commons seemed simply the natural discontent which follows on ill success. If he dissolved the Houses, it was in the full belief that their constitutional demands could be lulled by a military triumph. His hands were no sooner free than he sailed for the Hague to conclude a general alliance against the House of Austria, while a fleet of ninety vessels and ten thousand soldiers left Plymouth in October for the coast of Spain. But these vast projects broke down before Buckingham's administrative incapacity. The plan of alliance proved fruitless. After an idle descent on Cadiz the Spanish expedition returned broken with mutiny and disease; and the

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enormous debt which had been incurred in its equipment forced the favourite to advise a new summons of the Houses in the coming year. But he was keenly alive to the peril in which his failure had plunged him, and to a coalition which had been formed between his rivals at Court and the leaders of the last Parliament. The older nobles looked to his ruin to restore the power of the Council; and in this the leaders of the Commons went with them. Buckingham's reckless daring led him to anticipate the danger by a series of blows which should strike terror into his opponents. The Councillors were humbled by the committal of Lord Arundel to the Tower. Sir Richard Philips, Coke, and four other leading patriots were made sheriffs of their counties, and thus prevented from sitting in the coming Parliament.

Eliot.

But their exclusion only left the field free for a more terrible foe. If Hampden and Pym are the great figures which embody the later national resistance, the earlier struggle for Parliamentary liberty centres in the figure of Sir John Eliot. Of an old family which had settled under Elizabeth near the fishing hamlet of St. Germain's, and whose stately mansion gives its name of Port Eliot to a little town on the Tamar, he had risen to the post of Vice-Admiral of Devonshire under the patronage of Buckingham, and had seen his activity in the suppression of piracy in the Channel rewarded by an unjust imprisonment. He was now in the first vigour of manhood, with a mind exquisitely cultivated and familiar with the poetry and learning of his day, a nature singularly lofty and devout, a fearless and vehement temper. There was a hot impulsive element in his nature which showed itself in youth in his drawing sword on a neighbour who denounced him to his father, and which in later years gave its characteristic fire to his eloquence. But his intellect was as clear and cool as his temper was ardent. What he believed in was the English Parliament. He saw in it the collective wisdom of the realm; and in that wisdom he

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put a firmer trust than in the state-craft of kings. In the general enthusiasm which followed on the failure of the Spanish marriage, Eliot had stood almost alone in pressing for a recognition of the rights of Parliament as a preliminary to any real reconciliation with the Crown. He fixed, from the very outset of his career, on the responsibility of the royal ministers to Parliament as the one critical point for English liberty.

It was to enforce the demand of this that he availed himself of Buckingham's sacrifice of the Treasurer, Cranfield, to the resentment of the Commons. "The greater the delinquent," he urged, "the greater the delict. They are a happy thing, great men and officers, if they be good, and one of the greatest blessings of the land: but power converted into evil is the greatest curse that can befall it." But the Parliament of 1626 had hardly met when Eliot came to the front to threaten a greater criminal than Cranfield. So menacing were his words, as he called for an enquiry into the failure before Cadiz, that Charles himself stooped to answer threat with threat. "I see," he wrote to the House, "you especially aim at the Duke of Buckingham. I must let you know that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you, much less such as are of eminent place and near to me." A more direct attack on a right already acknowledged in the impeachment of Bacon and Cranfield could hardly be imagined, but Eliot refused to move from his constitutional ground. The King was by law irresponsible, he "could do no wrong." If the country therefore was to be saved from a pure despotism, it must be by enforcing the responsibility of the ministers who counselled and executed his acts. Eliot persisted in denouncing Buckingham's incompetence and corruption, and the Commons ordered the subsidy which the Crown had demanded to be brought in "when we shall have presented our grievances, and received his Majesty's answer thereto." Charles summoned them to Whitehall, and commanded them to cancel the

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condition. He would grant them "liberty of counsel, but not of control;" and he closed the interview with a significant threat. "Remember," he said, "that Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution: and therefore, as I find the fruits of them to be good or evil, they are to continue or not to be." But the will of the Commons was as resolute as the will of the King. Buckingham's impeachment was voted and carried to the Lords.

*Impeachment
of
Buckingham.*

The favourite took his seat as a peer to listen to the charge with so insolent an air of contempt that one of the managers appointed by the Commons to conduct it turned sharply on him. "Do you jeer, my Lord!" said Sir Dudley Digges. "I can show you when a greater man than your Lordship—as high as you in place and power, and as deep in the King's favour—has been hanged for as small a crime as these articles contain." But his arrogance raised a more terrible foe than Sir Dudley Digges. The "proud carriage" of the Duke provoked an attack from Eliot which marks a new era in Parliamentary speech. From the first the vehemence and passion of his words had contrasted with the grave, colourless reasoning of older speakers. His opponents complained that Eliot aimed to "stir up affections." The quick emphatic sentences he substituted for the cumbrous periods of the day, his rapid argument, his vivacious and caustic allusions, his passionate appeals, his fearless invective, struck a new note in English eloquence. The frivolous ostentation of Buckingham, his very figure blazing with jewels and gold, gave point to the fierce attack. "He has broken those nerves and sinews of our land, the stores and treasures of the King. There needs no search for it. It is too visible. His profuse expenses, his superfluous feasts, his magnificent buildings, his riots, his excesses, what are they but the visible evidences of an express exhausting of the state, a chronicle of the immensity of his waste of the revenues of the Crown?" With the same terrible directness Eliot reviewed the

Duke's greed and corruption, his insatiate ambition, his seizure of all public authority, his neglect of every public duty, his abuse for selfish ends of the powers he had accumulated. "The pleasure of his Majesty, his known directions, his public acts, his acts of council, the decrees of courts—all must be made inferior to this man's will. No right, no interest may withstand him. Through the power of state and justice he has dared ever to strike at his own ends." "My Lords," he ended, after a vivid parallel between Buckingham and Sejanus, "you see the man! What have been his actions, what he is like, you know! I leave him to your judgement. This only is conceived by us, the knights, citizens, and burgesses of the Commons House of Parliament, that by him came all our evils, in him we find the causes, and on him must be the remedies! Pereat qui perdere cuncta festinat! Opprimatur ne omnes opprimat!"

In calling for Buckingham's removal the Houses were but exercising a right or a duty which was inherent in their very character of counsellors of the Crown. There had never been a time from the earliest days of the English Parliament when it had not called for the dismissal of evil advisers. What had in older time been done by risings of the baronage had been done since the Houses gathered at Westminster by their protests as representatives of the realm. They were far from having dreamed as yet of the right which Parliament exercises to-day of naming the royal ministers, nor had they any wish to meddle with the common administration of government. It was only in exceptional instances of evil counsel, when some favourite like Buckingham broke the union of the nation and the King, that they demanded a change. To Charles however their demand seemed a claim to usurp his sovereignty. His reply was as fierce and sudden as the attack of Eliot. He hurried to the House of Peers to avow as his own the deeds with which Buckingham was charged; while Eliot and Digges were called from their seats and

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*Dissolution
of the
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CHAP. V. committed prisoners to the Tower. The Commons however refused to proceed with public business till their members were restored; and after a ten-days' struggle Eliot was released. But his release was only a prelude to the close of the Parliament. "Not one moment," the King replied to the prayer of his Council for delay; and a final remonstrance in which the Commons begged him to dismiss Buckingham from his service for ever was met on the sixteenth of June by their instant dissolution. The remonstrance was burnt by royal order; Eliot was deprived of his Vice-Admiralty; and on the old pretext alleged by James for evading the law, the pretext that what it forbade was the demand of forced gifts and not of voluntary loans to the Crown, the subsidies which the Parliament had refused to grant till their grievances were redressed were levied in the arbitrary form of benevolences.

*The
Forced
Loan.*

But the tide of public resistance was slowly rising. Refusals to give anything "save by way of Parliament" came in from county after county. When the subsidy-men of Middlesex and Westminster were urged to comply, they answered with a tumultuous shout of "a Parliament! a Parliament! else no subsidies!" Kent stood out to a man. In Bucks the very justices neglected to ask for the "free gift." The freeholders of Cornwall only answered that, "if they had but two kine, they would sell one of them for supply to his Majesty—in a Parliamentary way." The failure of the voluntary benevolence forced Charles to pass from evasion into open defiance of the law. He met it in 1627 by the levy of a forced loan. It was in vain that Chief Justice Crewe refused to acknowledge that such loans were legal. The law was again trampled under foot, as in the case of his predecessor, Coke; and Crewe was dismissed from his post. Commissioners were named to assess the amount which every landowner was bound to lend, and to examine on oath all who refused. Every means of persuasion, as of force, was resorted to. The pulpits of the Laudian

clergy resounded with the cry of "passive obedience." Dr. Mainwaring preached before Charles himself, that the King needed no Parliamentary warrant for taxation, and that to resist his will was to incur eternal damnation. Soldiers were quartered on recalcitrant boroughs. Poor men who refused to lend were pressed into the army or navy. Stubborn tradesmen were flung into prison. Buckingham himself undertook the task of overawing the nobles and the gentry. Among the bishops, the Primate and Bishop Williams of Lincoln alone resisted the King's will. The first was suspended on a frivolous pretext, and the second was disgraced. But in the country at large resistance was universal. The northern counties in a mass set the Crown at defiance. The Lincolnshire farmers drove the Commissioners from the town. Shropshire, Devon, and Warwickshire "refused utterly." Eight peers, with Lord Essex and Lord Warwick at their head, declined to comply with the exaction as illegal. Two hundred country gentlemen, whose obstinacy had not been subdued by their transfer from prison to prison, were summoned before the Council; and John Hampden, as yet only a young Buckinghamshire squire, appeared at the board to begin that career of patriotism which has made his name dear to Englishmen. "I could be content to lend," he said, "but fear to draw on myself that curse in Magna Charta, which should be read twice a year against those who infringe it." So close an imprisonment in the Gate House rewarded his protest "that he never afterwards did look like the same man he was before."

The fierce energy with which Buckingham pressed the forced loan was no mere impulse of angry tyranny. Never was money so needed by the Crown. The blustering and blundering of the favourite had at last succeeded in plunging him into war with his own allies. England had been told that the friendship of France, a friendship secured by the King's marriage with a French princess, was the basis on which Charles was building up his great European alliance against Spain. She now suddenly found

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herself at war with Spain and France together. The steps by which this result had been brought about throw an amusing light on the capacity of the young King and his minister. The occupation of the Palatinate had forced France to provide for its own safety. Spain already fronted her along the Pyrenees and the border of the Netherlands; if the Palatinate was added to the Spanish possession of Franche-Comté, it would close France in on the east as well the north and the south. War therefore was being forced on the French monarchy when Charles and Buckingham sought its alliance against Spain; and nothing hindered an outbreak of hostilities but a revolt of the Protestant town of Rochelle. Lewis the Thirteenth pleaded the impossibility of engaging in such a struggle so long as the Huguenots could rise in his rear; and he called on England to help him by lending ships to blockade Rochelle into submission in time for action in the spring of 1625. The Prince and Buckingham brought James to assent; but Charles had no sooner mounted the throne than he shrank from sending ships against a Protestant city, and secretly instigated the crews to mutiny against their captains on an order to sail. The vessels, it was trusted, would then arrive too late to take part in the siege. Unluckily for this intrigue they arrived to find the city still in arms, and it was the appearance of English ships among their enemies which forced the men of Rochelle to submit. While Englishmen were angered by the use of English vessels against Protestantism, France resented the King's attempt to evade his pledge. Its Court resented yet more the hesitation which Charles showed in face of his Parliament in fulfilling the promise he had given in the marriage-treaty of tolerating Catholic worship; and its resentment was embittered by an expulsion from the realm of the French attendants on the new Queen, a step to which Charles was at last driven by their insolence and intrigues. On the other hand, French statesmen were offended by the seizure of French ships charged with carrying materials of war to the Spaniards, and by an attempt of the English

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sovereign to atone for his past attack on Rochelle by constituting himself mediator of a peace on behalf of the Huguenots.

But though grounds of quarrel multiplied every day, the French minister, Richelieu, had no mind for strife. He was now master of the Catholic faction which had fed the dispute between the Crown and the Huguenots with the aim of bringing about a reconciliation with Spain; he saw that in the European conflict which lay before him the friendship or the neutrality of England were all but essential; and though he gathered a fleet in the Channel and took a high tone of remonstrance, he strove by concession after concession to avert war. But on war Buckingham was resolved. Of policy in any true sense of the word the favourite knew nothing; for the real interest of England or the balance of Europe he cared little; what he saw before him was the chance of a blow at a power he had come to hate, and the chance of a war which would make him popular at home. The mediation of Charles in favour of Rochelle had convinced Richelieu that the complete reduction of that city was a necessary prelude to any effective intervention in Germany. If Lewis was to be master abroad, he must first be master at home. But it was hard for lookers-on to read the Cardinal's mind or to guess with what a purpose he resolved to exact submission from the Huguenots. In England, where the danger of Rochelle seemed a fresh part of the Catholic attack upon Protestantism throughout the world, the enthusiasm for the Huguenots was intense; and Buckingham resolved to take advantage of this enthusiasm to secure such a triumph for the royal arms as should silence all opposition at home. It was for this purpose that the forced loan was pushed on; and in July 1627 a fleet of a hundred vessels sailed under Buckingham's command for the relief of Rochelle. But imposing as was his force, Buckingham showed himself as incapable a soldier as he had proved a statesman. The troops were landed on the Isle of Rhé, in front of the

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harbour; but after a useless siege of the Castle of St. Martin, the English soldiers were forced in October to fall back along a narrow causeway to their ships, and two thousand fell in the retreat without the loss of a single man to their enemies.

The first result of the failure at Rhé was the summoning of a new Parliament. Overwhelmed as he was with debt and shame, Charles was forced to call the Houses together again in the spring of 1628. The elections promised ill for the Court. Its candidates were everywhere rejected. The patriot leaders were triumphantly returned. To have suffered in the recent resistance to arbitrary taxation was the sure road to a seat. It was this question which absorbed all others in men's minds. Even Buckingham's removal was of less moment than the redress of personal wrongs; and some of the chief leaders of the Commons had not hesitated to bring Charles to consent to summon Parliament by promising to abstain from attacks on Buckingham. Against such a resolve Eliot protested in vain. But on the question of personal liberty the tone of the Commons when they met in March was as vehement as that of Eliot. "We must vindicate our ancient liberties," said Sir Thomas Wentworth in words soon to be remembered against himself: "we must reinforce the laws made by our ancestors. We must set such a stamp upon them, as no licentious spirit shall dare hereafter to invade them." Heedless of sharp and menacing messages from the King, of demands that they should take his "royal word" for their liberties, the House bent itself to one great work, the drawing up a Petition of Right. The statutes that protected the subject against arbitrary taxation, against loans and benevolences, against punishment, outlawry, or deprivation of goods, otherwise than by lawful judgement of his peers, against arbitrary imprisonment without stated charge, against billeting of soldiery on the people or enactment of martial law in time of peace, were formally recited. The breaches

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of them under the last two sovereigns, and above all since the dissolution of the last Parliament, were recited as formally. At the close of this significant list, the Commons prayed "that no man hereafter be compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent by Act of Parliament. And that none be called to make answer, or to take such oaths, or to be confined or otherwise molested or disputed concerning the same, or for refusal thereof. And that no freeman may in such manner as is before mentioned be imprisoned or detained. And that your Majesty would be pleased to remove the said soldiers and mariners, and that your people may not be so burthened in time to come. And that the commissions for proceeding by martial law may be revoked and annulled, and that hereafter no commissions of like nature may issue forth to any person or persons whatsoever to be executed as aforesaid, lest by colour of them any of your Majesty's subjects be destroyed and put to death, contrary to the laws and franchises of the land. All which they humbly pray of your most excellent Majesty, as their rights and liberties, according to the laws and statutes of the realm. And that your Majesty would also vouchsafe to declare that the awards, doings, and proceedings to the prejudice of your people in any of the premisses shall not be drawn hereafter into consequence or example. And that your Majesty would be pleased graciously for the further comfort and safety of your people to declare your royal will and pleasure, that in the things aforesaid all your officers and ministers shall serve you according to the laws and statutes of this realm, as they tender the honour of your Majesty and the prosperity of the kingdom."

It was in vain that the Lords strove to conciliate Charles by a reservation of his "sovereign power." "Our petition," Pym quietly replied, "is for the laws of England, and this power seems to be another power distinct from the power of the law." The Lords yielded, but Charles gave an

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evasive reply; and the failure of the more moderate counsels for which his own had been set aside, called Eliot again to the front. In a speech of unprecedented boldness he moved the presentation to the King of a Remonstrance on the state of the realm. But at the moment when he again touched on Buckingham's removal as the preliminary of any real improvement the Speaker of the House interposed. "There was a command laid on him," he said, "to interrupt any that should go about to lay an aspersion on the King's ministers." The breach of their privilege of free speech produced a scene in the Commons such as St. Stephen's had never witnessed before. Eliot sat abruptly down amidst the solemn silence of the House. "Then appeared such a spectacle of passions," says a letter of the time, "as the like had seldom been seen in such an assembly: some weeping, some expostulating, some prophesying of the fatal ruin of our kingdom, some playing the divines in confessing their sins and country's sins which drew these judgements upon us, some finding, as it were, fault with those that wept. There were above an hundred weeping eyes, many who offered to speak being interrupted and silenced by their own passions." Pym himself rose only to sit down choked with tears. At last Sir Edward Coke found words to blame himself for the timid counsels which had checked Eliot at the beginning of the Session, and to protest "that the author and source of all those miseries was the Duke of Buckingham." Shouts of assent greeted the resolution to insert the Duke's name in their Remonstrance. But at this moment the King's obstinacy gave way. A fresh expedition, which had been sent to Rochelle, returned unsuccessful; and if the siege was to be raised far greater and costlier efforts must be made. And that the siege should be raised Buckingham was still resolved. All his energies were now enlisted in this project; and to get supplies for his fleet he bent the King to consent in June to the Petition of Right. As Charles understood it, indeed, the consent meant little. The one

point for which he really cared was the power of keeping men in prison without bringing them to trial or assigning causes for their imprisonment. On this he had consulted his judges; and they had answered that his consent to the Petition left his rights untouched; like other laws, they said, the Petition would have to be interpreted when it came before them, and the prerogative remained unaffected. As to the rest, while waiving all claim to levy taxes not granted by Parliament, Charles still reserved his right to levy impositions paid customarily to the Crown, and amongst these he counted tonnage and poundage. Of these reserves however the Commons knew nothing. The King's consent won a grant of subsidy, and such a ringing of bells and lighting of bonfires from the people "as were never seen but upon his Majesty's return from Spain."

But, like all the King's concessions, it came too late to effect the end at which he aimed. The Commons persisted in presenting their Remonstrance. Charles received it coldly and ungraciously; while Buckingham, who had stood defiantly at his master's side as he was denounced, fell on his knees to speak. "No, George!" said the King as he raised him; and his demeanour gave emphatic proof that the Duke's favour remained undiminished. "We will perish together, George," he added at a later time, "if thou dost." He had in fact got the subsidies which he needed; and it was easy to arrest all proceedings against Buckingham by proroguing Parliament at the close of June. The Duke himself cared little for a danger which he counted on drowning in the blaze of a speedy triumph. He had again gathered a strong fleet and a fine body of men, and his ardent fancy already saw the harbour of Rochelle forced and the city relieved. No shadow of his doom had fallen over the brilliant favourite when he set out in August to take command of the expedition. But a lieutenant in the army, John Felton, soured by neglect and wrongs, had found in the Remonstrance some imaginary sanction for the revenge he plotted; and, mixing with the

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*Death of
Buckingham.*

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throng which crowded the hall at Portsmouth, he stabbed Buckingham to the heart. Charles flung himself on his bed in a passion of tears when the news reached him; but outside the Court it was welcomed with a burst of joy. Young Oxford bachelors, grave London Aldermen, vied with each other in drinking healths to Felton. "God bless thee, little David," cried an old woman, as the murderer passed manacled by; "the Lord comfort thee," shouted the crowd, as the Tower gates closed on him. The very forces in the Duke's armament at Portsmouth shouted to the King, as he witnessed their departure, a prayer that he would "spare John Felton, their sometime fellow soldier." But whatever national hopes the fall of Buckingham had aroused were quickly dispelled. Weston, a creature of the Duke, became Lord Treasurer, and his system remained unchanged. "Though our Achan is cut off," said Eliot, "the accursed thing remains."

*The
Laudian
Clergy.*

It seemed as if no act of Charles could widen the breach which his reckless lawlessness had made between himself and his subjects. But there was one thing dearer to England than free speech in Parliament, than security for property, or even personal liberty; and that one thing was, in the phrase of the day, "the Gospel." The gloom which at the outset of this reign we saw settling down on every Puritan heart had deepened with each succeeding year. The great struggle abroad had gone more and more against Protestantism, and at this moment the end of the cause seemed to have come. In Germany Lutheran and Calvinist alike lay at last beneath the heel of the Catholic House of Austria. The fall of Rochelle, which followed quick on the death of Buckingham, seemed to leave the Huguenots of France at the feet of a Roman Cardinal. In such a time as this, while England was thrilling with excitement at the thought that her own hour of deadly peril might come again, as it had come in the year of the Armada, the Puritans saw with horror the quick growth of Arminianism at home. Laud was now Bishop of London as well as the

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practical administrator of Church affairs, and to the excited Protestantism of the country Laud and the Churchmen whom he headed seemed a danger more really formidable than the Popery which was making such mighty strides abroad. To the Puritans they were traitors, traitors to God and their country at once. Their aim was to draw the Church of England farther away from the Protestant Churches, and nearer to the Church which Protestants regarded as Babylon. They aped Roman ceremonies. Cautiously and tentatively they were introducing Roman doctrine. But they had none of the sacerdotal independence which Rome had at any rate preserved. They were abject in their dependence on the Crown. Their gratitude for the royal protection which enabled them to defy the religious instincts of the realm showed itself in their erection of the most dangerous pretensions of the monarchy into religious dogmas. Their model, Bishop Andrewes, had declared James to have been inspired by God. They preached passive obedience to the worst tyranny. They declared the person and goods of the subject to be at the King's absolute disposal. They were turning religion into a systematic attack on English liberty, nor was their attack to be lightly set aside. Up to this time they had been little more than a knot of courtly parsons, for the mass of the clergy, like their flocks, were steady Puritans; but the well-known energy of Laud and the open patronage of the court promised a speedy increase of their numbers and their power. It was significant that upon the prorogation of 1628 Montague had been made a bishop, and Mainwaring, who had called Parliaments ciphers in the state, had been rewarded with a fat living. Instances such as these would hardly be lost on the mass of the clergy, and sober men looked forward to a day when every pulpit would be ringing with exhortations to passive obedience, with denunciations of Calvinism and apologies for Rome.

Of all the members of the House of Commons Eliot was least fanatical in his natural bent, but the religious crisis

*The
Avowal.*

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swept away for the moment all other thoughts from his mind. "Danger enlarges itself in so great a measure," he wrote from the country, "that nothing but Heaven shrouds us from despair." When the Commons met again in January, 1629, they met in Eliot's temper. The first business called up was that of religion. The House refused to consider any question of supplies, or even that of tonnage and poundage, which still remained unsettled though Charles had persisted in levying these duties without any vote of Parliament, till the religious grievance was discussed. "The Gospel," Eliot burst forth, "is that Truth in which this kingdom has been happy through a long and rare prosperity. This ground therefore let us lay for a foundation of our building, that that Truth, not with words, but with actions we will maintain!" "There is a ceremony," he went on, "used in the Eastern Churches, of standing at the repetition of the Creed, to testify their purpose to maintain it, not only with their bodies upright, but with their swords drawn. Give me leave to call that a custom very commendable!" The Commons answered their leader's challenge by a solemn avowal. They avowed that they held for truth that sense of the Articles as established by Parliament, which by the public act of the Church, and the general and current exposition of the writers of their Church, had been delivered unto them. It is easy to regard such an avowal as a mere outburst of Puritan bigotry, and the opposition of Charles as a defence of the freedom of religious thought. But the real importance of the avowal both to King and Commons lay in its political significance. In the mouth of the Commons it was a renewal of the claim that all affairs of the realm, spiritual as well as temporal, were cognizable in Parliament. To Charles it seemed as if the Commons were taking to themselves, in utter defiance of his rights as governor of the Church, "the interpretation of articles of religion; the deciding of which in doctrinal points," to use his own words, "only appertaineth to the

clergy and Convocation." To use more modern phrases, the King insisted that the nation should receive its creed at the hands of the priesthood and the crown. England in the avowal of Parliament asserted that the right to determine the belief of a nation lay with the nation itself.

But the debates over religion were suddenly interrupted. In granting the Petition of Right we have seen that Charles had no purpose of parting with his power of arbitrary arrest or of levying customs. Both practices in fact went on as before, and the goods of merchants who refused to pay tonnage and poundage were seized as of old. At the re-opening of the Session indeed the King met the Commons with a proposal that they should grant him tonnage and poundage and pass silently over what had been done by his officers. But the House was far from assenting to the interpretation which Charles had put on the Petition, and it was resolved to vindicate what it held to be the law. It deferred all grant of customs till the wrong done in the illegal levy of them was redressed, and summoned the farmers of those dues to the bar. But though they appeared, they pleaded the King's command as a ground for their refusal to answer. The House was proceeding to a protest, when on the second of March the Speaker signified that he had received an order to adjourn. Dissolution was clearly at hand, and the long-suppressed indignation broke out in a scene of strange disorder. The Speaker was held down in the chair, while Eliot, still clinging to his great principle of ministerial responsibility, denounced the new Treasurer as the adviser of the measure. "None have gone about to break Parliaments," he added in words to which after events gave a terrible significance, "but in the end Parliaments have broken them." The doors were locked, and in spite of the Speaker's protests, of the repeated knocking of the usher at the door, and the gathering tumult within the House itself, the loud "Aye, Aye!" of the bulk of the members supported Eliot in his last vindication of English

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*Dissolution
of the
Parliament.*

CHAP. V. liberty. By successive resolutions the Commons declared
 Charles I. whosoever should bring in innovations in religion, or what-
 and the ever minister endorsed the levy of subsidies not granted in
 Parlia- Parliament, "a capital enemy to the kingdom and common-
 ment. wealth," and every subject voluntarily complying with
 1625- illegal acts and demands "a betrayer of the liberty of
 1629. England and an enemy of the same."

CHAPTER VI.

THE PERSONAL GOVERNMENT.

1629—1635.

At the opening of his third Parliament Charles had hinted in ominous words that the continuance of Parliament at all depended on its compliance with his will. "If you do not your duty," said the King, "mine would then order me to use those other means which God has put into my hand." When the threat failed to break the resistance of the Commons the ominous words passed into a settled policy. "We have showed," said a proclamation which followed on the dissolution of the Houses, on the tenth of March, "by our frequent meeting our people our love to the use of Parliament. Yet the late abuse having for the present drawn us unwillingly out of that course, we shall account it presumption for any to prescribe any time unto us for Parliament."

*The
policy of
Charles.*

No Parliament in fact met for eleven years. But it would be unfair to charge the King at the outset of this period with any definite scheme of establishing a tyranny, or of changing what he conceived to be the older constitution of the realm. He "hated the very name of Parliaments;" but in spite of his hate he had as yet no purpose of abolishing them. His belief was that England would in time recover its senses, and that then Parliament might reassemble without inconvenience to the Crown. In the interval, however long it might be, he proposed to govern single-handed by the use of "those means which God had put into his hands." Resistance indeed he was resolved

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to put down. The leaders of the country party in the last Parliament were thrown into prison; and Eliot died, the first martyr of English liberty, in the Tower. Men were forbidden to speak of the re-assembling of a Parliament. But here the King stopped. The opportunity which might have suggested dreams of organized despotism to a Richelieu suggested only means of filling his exchequer to Charles. He had in truth neither the grander nor the meaner instincts of a born tyrant. He did not seek to gain an absolute power over his people, because he believed that his absolute power was already a part of the constitution of the country. He set up no standing army to secure it, partly because he was poor, but yet more because his faith in his position was such that he never dreamed of any effectual resistance. He believed implicitly in his own prerogative, and he never doubted that his subjects would in the end come to believe in it too. His system rested not on force, but on a moral basis, on an appeal from opinion ill-informed to opinion, as he looked on it, better-informed. What he relied on was not the soldier, but the judge. It was for the judges to show from time to time the legality of his claims, and for England at last to bow to the force of conviction.

Peace.

He was resolute indeed to free the Crown from its dependence on Parliament; but his expedients for freeing the Crown from a dependence against which his pride as a sovereign revolted were simply peace and economy. With France an accommodation had been brought about in 1629 by the fall of Rochelle. The terms which Richelieu granted to the defeated Huguenots showed the real drift of his policy; and the reconciliation of the two countries set the King's hands free to aid Germany in her hour of despair. The doom of the Lutheran princes of the north had followed hard on the ruin of the Calvinistic princes of the south. The selfish neutrality of Saxony and Brandenburg received a fitting punishment in their

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helplessness before the triumphant advance of the Emperor's troops. His general, Wallenstein, encamped on the Baltic; and the last hopes of German Protestantism lay in the resistance of Stralsund. The danger called the Scandinavian powers to its aid. Denmark and Sweden leagued to resist Wallenstein; and Charles sent a squadron to the Elbe while he called on Holland to join in a quadruple alliance against the Emperor. Richelieu promised to support the alliance with a fleet: and even the withdrawal of Denmark, bribed into neutrality by the restitution of her possessions on the mainland, left the force of the league an imposing one. Gustavus of Sweden remained firm in his purpose of entering Germany, and appealed for aid to both England and France. But at this moment the dissolution of the Parliament left Charles penniless. He at once resolved on a policy of peace, refused aid to Gustavus, withdrew his ships from the Baltic, and opened negotiations with Spain, which brought about a treaty at the end of 1630 on the virtual basis of an abandonment of the Palatinate. Ill luck clung to Charles in peace as in war. He had withdrawn from his efforts to win back the dominions of his brother-in-law at the very moment when those efforts were about to be crowned with success. The treaty with Spain was hardly concluded when Gustavus landed in Germany and began his wonderful career of victory. Charles at once strove to profit by his success; and in 1631 he suffered the Marquis of Hamilton to join the Swedish king with a force of Scotch and English regiments. After some service in Silesia, this force aided in the battle of Breitenfeld and followed Gustavus in his reconquest of the Palatinate. But the conqueror demanded, as the price of its restoration to Frederick, that Charles should again declare war upon Spain; and this was a price that the King would not pay. The danger in Germany was over; the power of France and of Holland threatened the supremacy of England on the seas; and even had these reasons not swayed him to

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measures.

friendship with Spain, Charles was stubborn not to plunge into a combat which would again force him to summon a Parliament.

What absorbed his attention at home was the question of the revenue. The debt was a large one; and the ordinary income of the Crown, unaided by Parliamentary supplies, was inadequate to meet its ordinary expenditure. Charles himself was frugal and laborious; and the economy of Weston, the new Lord Treasurer, whom he raised to the earldom of Portland, contrasted advantageously with the waste and extravagance of the government under Buckingham. But economy failed to close the yawning gulf of the Treasury, and the course into which Charles was driven by the financial pressure showed with how wise a prescience the Commons had fixed on the point of arbitrary taxation as the chief danger to constitutional freedom. It is curious to see to what shifts the royal pride was driven in its effort at once to fill the Exchequer, and yet to avoid, as far as it could, any direct breach of constitutional law in the imposition of taxes by the sole authority of the Crown. The dormant powers of the prerogative were strained to their utmost. The right of the Crown to force knighthood on the landed gentry was revived, in order to squeeze them into composition for the refusal of it. Fines were levied on them for the redress of defects in their title-deeds. A Commission of the Forests exacted large sums from the neighbouring landowners for their encroachments on Crown lands. Three hundred thousand pounds were raised by this means in Essex alone. London, the special object of courtly dislike, on account of its stubborn Puritanism, was brought within the sweep of royal extortion by the enforcement of an illegal proclamation which James had issued, prohibiting its extension. Every house throughout the large suburban districts in which the prohibition had been disregarded was only saved from demolition by the payment of three years' rental to the Crown. The Treasury gained

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a hundred thousand pounds by this clever stroke, and Charles gained the bitter enmity of the great city whose strength and resources were fatal to him in the coming war. Though the Catholics were no longer troubled by any active persecution, and the Lord Treasurer was in heart a Papist, the penury of the Exchequer forced the Crown to maintain the old system of fines for "recusancy."

Vexatious measures of extortion such as these were far less hurtful to the state than the conversion of justice into a means of supplying the royal necessities by means of the Star Chamber. The jurisdiction of the King's Council had been revived by Wolsey as a check on the nobles; and it had received great developement, especially on the side of criminal law, during the Tudor reigns. Forgery, perjury, riot, maintenance, fraud, libel, and conspiracy, were the chief offences cognizable in this court, but its scope extended to every misdemeanour, and especially to charges where, from the imperfection of the common law, or the power of offenders, justice was baffled in the lower courts. Its process resembled that of Chancery: it usually acted on an information laid before it by the King's Attorney. Both witnesses and accused were examined on oath by special interrogatories, and the Court was at liberty to adjudge any punishment short of death. The possession of such a weapon would have been fatal to liberty under a great tyrant; under Charles it was turned simply to the profit of the Exchequer. Large numbers of cases which would ordinarily have come before the Courts of Common Law were called before the Star Chamber, simply for the purpose of levying fines for the Crown. The same motive accounts for the enormous penalties which were exacted for offences of a trivial character. The marriage of a gentleman with his niece was punished by the forfeiture of twelve thousand pounds, and fines of four and five thousand pounds were awarded for brawls between lords of the Court. Fines such as these however affected a smaller range of sufferers than the financial

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expedient to which Weston had recourse in the renewal of monopolies. Monopolies, abandoned by Elizabeth, extinguished by Act of Parliament under James, and denounced with the assent of Charles himself in the Petition of Right, were again set on foot, and on a scale far more gigantic than had been seen before; the companies who undertook them paying a fixed duty on their profits as well as a large sum for the original concession of the monopoly. Wine, soap, salt, and almost every article of domestic consumption fell into the hands of monopolists, and rose in price out of all proportion to the profit gained by the Crown. "They sup in our cup," Colepepper said afterwards in the Long Parliament, "they dip in our dish, they sit by our fire; we find them in the dye-fat, the wash bowls, and the powdering tub. They share with the cutler in his box. They have marked and sealed us from head to foot."

Customs
and
benevolences.

In spite of the financial expedients we have described the Treasury would have remained unfilled had not the King persisted in those financial measures which had called forth the protest of the Parliament. The exaction of customs duties went on as of old at the ports. The resistance of the London merchants to their payment was roughly put down by the Star Chamber; and an alderman who complained bitterly that men were worse off in England than in Turkey was ruined by a fine of two thousand pounds. Writs for benevolences, under the old pretext of loans, were issued for every shire. But the freeholders of the counties were more difficult to deal with than London aldermen. When those of Cornwall were called together at Bodmin to contribute to a voluntary loan, half the hundreds refused, and the yield of the rest came to little more than two thousand pounds. One of the Cornishmen has left an amusing record of the scene which took place before the Commissioners appointed for assessment of the loan. "Some with great words and threatenings, some with persuasions," he says, "were drawn to it. I was like to have

been complimented out of my money; but knowing with whom I had to deal, I held, when I talked with them, my hands fast in my pockets."

By means such as these the financial difficulty was in some measure met. During Weston's five years of office the debt, which had mounted to sixteen hundred thousand pounds, was reduced by one half. On the other hand the annual revenue of the Crown was raised from half a million to eight hundred thousand. Nor was there much sign of active discontent. Vexatious indeed and illegal as were the proceedings of the Crown, there seems in these earlier years of personal rule to have been little apprehension of any permanent danger to freedom in the country at large. To those who read the letters of the time there is something inexpressibly touching in the general faith of their writers in the ultimate victory of the Law. Charles was obstinate, but obstinacy was too common a foible amongst Englishmen to rouse any vehement resentment. The people were as stubborn as their King, and their political sense told them that the slightest disturbance of affairs must shake down the financial fabric which Charles was slowly building up, and force him back on subsidies and a Parliament. Meanwhile they would wait for better days, and their patience was aided by the general prosperity of the country. The great Continental wars threw wealth into English hands. The intercourse between Spain and Flanders was carried on solely in English ships, and the English flag covered the intercourse of Portugal with its colonies in Africa, India, and the Pacific. The long peace was producing its inevitable results in an extension of commerce and a rise of manufactures in the towns of the West Riding of Yorkshire. Fresh land was being brought into cultivation, and a great scheme was set on foot for reclaiming the Fens. The new wealth of the country gentry, through the increase of rent, was seen in the splendour of the houses which they were raising. The contrast of this peace and prosperity with the ruin and bloodshed of the

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prosperity.

CHAP. VI. Continent afforded a ready argument to the friends of the King's system. So tranquil was the outer appearance of the country that in Court circles all sense of danger had disappeared. "Some of the greatest statesmen and privy councillors," says May, "would ordinarily laugh when the word, 'liberty of the subject,' was named." There were courtiers bold enough to express their hope that "the King would never need any more Parliaments."

Wentworth. But beneath this outer calm "the country," Clarendon honestly tells us while eulogizing the Peace, "was full of pride and mutiny and discontent." Thousands were quitting England for America. The gentry held aloof from the Court. "The common people in the generality and the country freeholders would rationally argue of their own rights and the oppressions which were laid upon them." If Charles was content to deceive himself, there was one man among his ministers who saw that the people were right in their policy of patience, and that unless other measures were taken the fabric of despotism would fall at the first breath of adverse fortune. Sir Thomas Wentworth, a great Yorkshire landowner and one of the representatives of his county in Parliament, had stood during the Parliament of 1628 among the more prominent members of the Country party in the Commons. But he was no Eliot. He had no faith in Parliaments, save as means of checking exceptional misgovernment. He had no belief in the general wisdom of the realm, or in its value, when represented by the Commons, as a means of bringing about good government. Powerful as his mind was, it was arrogant and contemptuous; he knew his own capacity for rule, and he looked with scorn on the powers or wits of meaner men. He was a born administrator; and, like Bacon, he panted for an opportunity of displaying his talent in what then seemed the only sphere of political action. From the first moment of his appearance in public his passionate desire had been to find employment in the service of the Crown. At the close of the preceding reign

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he was already connected with the Court, he had secured a seat in Yorkshire for one of the royal ministers, and was believed to be on the high road to a peerage. But the consciousness of political ability which spurred his ambition roused the jealousy of Buckingham; and the haughty pride of Wentworth was flung by repeated slights into an attitude of opposition, which his eloquence—grander in its sudden outbursts, though less earnest and sustained than that of Eliot—soon rendered formidable. His intrigues at Court roused Buckingham to crush by a signal insult the rival whose genius he instinctively dreaded. While sitting in his court as sheriff of Yorkshire, Wentworth received the announcement of his dismissal from office and of the gift of his post to Sir John Savile, his rival in the county. "Since they will thus weakly breathe on me a seeming disgrace in the public face of my country," he said with a characteristic outburst of contemptuous pride, "I shall crave leave to wipe it away as openly, as easily!" His whole conception of a strong and able rule revolted against the miserable government of the favourite, his mal-administration at home, his failures and disgraces abroad. Wentworth's aim was to force on the King, not such a freedom as Eliot longed for, but such a system as the Tudors had clung to, where a large and noble policy placed the sovereign naturally at the head of the people, and where Parliaments sank into mere aids to the Crown. But before this could be, Buckingham and the system of blundering misrule that he embodied must be cleared away. It was with this end that Wentworth sprang to the front of the Commons in urging the Petition of Right. Whether in that crisis of his life some nobler impulse, some true passion for the freedom he was to trample under foot, mingled with his thirst for revenge, it is hard to tell. But his words were words of fire. "If he did not faithfully insist for the common liberty of the subject to be preserved whole and entire," it was thus he closed one of his speeches on the Petition, "it was his desire that he

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CHAP. VI. might be set as a beacon on a hill for all men else to wonder at."

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Wentworth
as
minister.

It is as such a beacon that his name has stood from that time to this. He had shown his powers to good purpose; and at the prorogation of the Parliament he passed into the service of the Crown. He became President of the Council of the North, a court set up in limitation of the common law, and which wielded almost unbounded authority beyond the Humber. In 1629 the death of Buckingham removed the obstacle that stood between his ambition and the end at which it had aimed throughout. All pretence to patriotism was set aside; Wentworth was admitted to the royal Council; and as he took his seat at the board he promised to "vindicate the Monarchy for ever from the conditions and restraints of subjects." So great was the faith in his zeal and power which he knew how to breathe into his royal master that he was at once raised to the peerage, and placed with Laud in the first rank of the King's councillors. Charles had good ground for this rapid confidence in his new minister. In Wentworth the very genius of tyranny was embodied. He soon passed beyond the mere aim of restoring the system of the Tudors. He was far too clear-sighted to share his master's belief that the arbitrary power which Charles was wielding formed any part of the old constitution of the country, or to dream that the mere lapse of time would so change the temper of Englishmen as to reconcile them to despotism. He knew that absolute rule was a new thing in England, and that the only way of permanently establishing it was not by reasoning, or by the force of custom, but by the force of fear. His system was the expression of his own inner temper; and the dark gloomy countenance, the full heavy eye, which meet us in Strafford's portrait are the best commentary on his policy of "Thorough." It was by the sheer strength of his genius, by the terror his violence inspired amid the meaner men whom Buckingham had left, by the general sense of his power, that he had forced himself upon the Court. He had none of the

small arts of a courtier. His air was that of a silent, proud, passionate man; and when he first appeared at Whitehall his rough uncourtly manners provoked a smile in the royal circle. But the smile soon died into a general hate. The Queen, frivolous and meddlesome as she was, detested him; his fellow-ministers intrigued against him, and seized on his hot speeches against the great lords, his quarrels with the royal household, his transports of passion at the very Council-table, to ruin him in his master's favour. The King himself, while steadily supporting him against his rivals, was utterly unable to understand his drift. Charles valued him as an administrator, disdainful of private ends, crushing great and small with the same haughty indifference to men's love or hate, and devoted to the one aim of building up the power of the Crown. But in his purpose of preparing for the great struggle with freedom which he saw before him, of building up by force such a despotism in England as Richelieu was building up in France, and of thus making England as great in Europe as France had been made by Richelieu, he could look for little sympathy and less help from the King.

Wentworth's genius turned impatiently to a sphere where it could act alone, untrammelled by the hindrances it encountered at home. His purpose was to prepare for the coming contest by the provision of a fixed revenue, arsenals, fortresses, and a standing army, and it was in Ireland that he resolved to find them. Till now this miserable country had been but a drain on the resources of the Crown. Under the administration of Mountjoy's successor, Sir Arthur Chichester, an able and determined effort had been made for the settlement of the conquered province by the general introduction of a purely English system of government, justice, and property. Every vestige of the old Celtic constitution of the country was rejected as "barbarous." The tribal authority of the chiefs was taken from them by law. They were reduced to the position of great nobles and landowners, while their tribesmen rose from subjects

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into tenants, owing only fixed and customary dues and services to their lords. The tribal system of property in common was set aside, and the communal holdings of the tribesmen turned into the copyholds of English law. In the same way the chieftains were stripped of their hereditary jurisdiction, and the English system of judges and trial by jury substituted for their proceedings under Brehon or customary law. To all these changes the Celts opposed the tenacious obstinacy of their race. Irish juries, then as now, refused to convict. Glad as the tribesmen were to be freed from the arbitrary exactions of their chiefs, they held them for chieftains still. The attempt made by Chichester, under pressure from England, to introduce the English uniformity of religion ended in utter failure; for the Englishry of the Pale remained as Catholic as the native Irishry; and the sole result of the measure was to build up a new Irish people out of both on the common basis of religion. Much however had been done by the firm yet moderate government of the Deputy, and signs were already appearing of a disposition on the part of the people to conform gradually to the new usages, when the English Council under James suddenly resolved upon and carried through the revolutionary measure which is known as the Colonization of Ulster. In 1610 the pacific and conservative policy of Chichester was abandoned for a vast policy of spoliation. Two-thirds of the north of Ireland was declared to have been confiscated to the Crown by the part that its possessors had taken in a recent effort at revolt; and the lands which were thus gained were allotted to new settlers of Scotch and English extraction. In its material results the Plantation of Ulster was undoubtedly a brilliant success. Farms and homesteads, churches and mills, rose fast amidst the desolate wilds of Tyrone. The Corporation of London undertook the colonization of Derry, and gave to the little town the name which its heroic defence has made so famous. The foundations of the economic prosperity which has raised Ulster high above the

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rest of Ireland in wealth and intelligence were undoubtedly laid in the confiscation of 1610. Nor did the measure meet with any opposition at the time save that of secret discontent. The evicted natives withdrew sullenly to the lands which had been left them by the spoiler, but all faith in English justice had been torn from the minds of the Irishry, and the seed had been sown of that fatal harvest of distrust and disaffection which was to be reaped through tyranny and massacre in the age to come.

But the bitter memories of conquest and spoliation only pointed out Ireland to Wentworth as the best field for his experiment. The balance of Catholic against Protestant might be used to make both parties dependent on the royal authority; the rights of conquest which in Wentworth's theory vested the whole land in the absolute possession of the Crown gave him scope for his administrative ability; and for the rest he trusted, and trusted justly, to the force of his genius and of his will. In the summer of 1633 he sailed as Lord Deputy to Ireland, and five years later his aim seemed almost realized. "The King," he wrote to Laud, "is as absolute here as any prince in the world can be." The government of the new deputy indeed was a rule of terror. Archbishop Usher, with almost every name which we can respect in the island, was the object of his insult and oppression. His tyranny strode over all legal bounds. Wentworth is the one English statesman of all time who may be said to have had no sense of law; and his scorn of it showed itself in his coercion of juries as of parliaments. The highest of the Irish nobles learned to tremble when a few insolent words, construed as mutiny, were enough to bring Lord Mountnorris before a council of war, and to inflict on him a sentence of death. But his tyranny aimed at public ends, and in Ireland the heavy hand of a single despot delivered the mass of the people at any rate from the local despotism of a hundred masters. The Irish landowners were for the first time made to feel themselves amenable to the law. Justice was enforced,

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in
Ireland.

CHAP. VI. outrage was repressed, the condition of the clergy was to some extent raised, the sea was cleared of the pirates who infested it. The foundation of the linen manufacture which was to bring wealth to Ulster, and the first development of Irish commerce, date from the Lieutenancy of Wentworth. Good government however was only a means with him for further ends. The noblest work to be done in Ireland was the bringing about a reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant, and an obliteration of the anger and thirst for vengeance which had been raised by the Ulster Plantation. Wentworth, on the other hand, angered the Protestants by a toleration of Catholic worship and a suspension of the persecution which had feebly begun against the priesthood, while he fed the irritation of the Catholics by urging in 1635 a new Plantation of Connaught. His purpose was to encourage a disunion which left both parties dependent for support and protection on the Crown. It was a policy which was to end in bringing about the horrors of the Irish revolt, the vengeance of Cromwell, and the long series of atrocities on both sides which make the story of the country he ruined so terrible to tell. But for the hour it left Ireland helpless in his hands. He doubled the revenue. He raised an army. To provide for its support he ventured, in spite of the panic with which Charles heard of his project, to summon in 1634 an Irish Parliament. His aim was to read a lesson to England and the King by showing how completely that dreaded thing, a Parliament, could be made an organ of the royal will; and his success was complete. The task of overawing an Irish Parliament indeed was no very difficult one. Two-thirds of its House of Commons consisted of the representatives of wretched villages which were pocket-boroughs of the Crown: while absent peers were forced to entrust their proxies to the Council to be used at its pleasure. But precautions were hardly needed. The two Houses trembled at the stern master who bade their members not let the King "find them muttering, or to speak it more truly, mutinying in

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corners," and voted with a perfect docility the means of maintaining an army of five thousand foot and five hundred horse. Had the subsidy been refused, the result would have been the same. "I would undertake," wrote Wentworth, "upon the peril of my head, to make the King's army able to subsist and provide for itself among them without their help."

While Strafford was thus working out his system of "Thorough" on one side of St. George's Channel, it was being carried out on the other by a mind inferior indeed to his own in genius, but almost equal to it in courage and tenacity. Cold, pedantic, superstitious as he was (he notes in his diary the entry of a robin-redbreast into his study as a matter of grave moment), William Laud rose out of the mass of court-prelates by his industry, his personal unselfishness, his remarkable capacity for administration. At a later period, when immersed in State-business, he found time to acquire so complete a knowledge of commercial affairs that the London merchants themselves owned him a master in matters of trade. Of statesmanship indeed he had none. The shrewdness of James had read the very heart of the man when Buckingham pressed for his first advancement to the see of St. David's. "He hath a restless spirit," said the old King, "which cannot see when things are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring matters to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain. Take him with you, but by my soul you will repent it." But Laud's influence was really derived from this oneness of purpose. He directed all the power of a clear, narrow mind and a dogged will to the realization of a single aim. His resolve was to raise the Church of England to what he conceived to be its real position as a branch, though a reformed branch, of the great Catholic Church throughout the world; protesting alike against the innovations of Rome and the innovations of Calvin, and basing its doctrines and usages on those of the Christian communion in the

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CHAP. VI. centuries which preceded the Council of Nicaea. The first step in the realization of such a theory was the severance of whatever ties had hitherto united the English Church to the Reformed Churches of the Continent. In Laud's view episcopal succession was of the essence of a Church; and by their rejection of bishops the Lutheran and Calvinistic Churches of Germany and Switzerland had ceased to be Churches at all. The freedom of worship therefore which had been allowed to the Huguenot refugees from France, or the Walloons from Flanders, was suddenly withdrawn; and the requirement of conformity with the Anglican ritual drove them in crowds from the southern ports to seek toleration in Holland. The same conformity was required from the English soldiers and merchants abroad, who had hitherto attended without scruple the services of the Calvinistic churches. The English ambassador in Paris was forbidden to visit the Huguenot conventicle at Charenton.

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As Laud drew further from the Protestants of the Continent, he drew, consciously or unconsciously, nearer to Rome. His theory owned Rome as a true branch of the Church, though severed from that of England by errors and innovations against which the Primate vigorously protested. But with the removal of these obstacles reunion would naturally follow; and his dream was that of bridging over the gulf which ever since the Reformation had parted the two Churches. The secret offer of a cardinal's hat proved Rome's sense that Laud was doing his work for her; while his rejection of it, and his own reiterated protestations, prove equally that he was doing it unconsciously. Union with the great body of Catholicism indeed he regarded as a work which only time could bring about, but for which he could prepare the Church of England by raising it to a higher standard of Catholic feeling and Catholic practice. The great obstacle in his way was the Puritanism of nine-tenths of the English people, and on Puritanism he made war without mercy. Till 1633 indeed his direct range

of action was limited to his own diocese of London, though his influence with the king enabled him in great measure to shape the general course of the government in ecclesiastical matters. But on the death of Abbot Laud was raised to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, and no sooner had his elevation placed him at the head of the English Church, than he turned the High Commission into a standing attack on the Puritan ministers. Rectors and vicars were scolded, suspended, deprived for "Gospel preaching." The use of the surplice, and the ceremonies most offensive to Puritan feeling, were enforced in every parish. The lectures founded in towns, which were the favourite posts of Puritan preachers, were rigorously suppressed. They found a refuge among the country gentlemen, and the Archbishop withdrew from the country gentlemen the privilege of keeping chaplains, which they had till then enjoyed. As parishes became vacant the High Church bishops had long been filling them with men who denounced Calvinism, and declared passive obedience to the sovereign to be part of the law of God. The Puritans felt the stress of this process, and endeavoured to meet it by buying up the appropriations of livings, and securing through feeoffees a succession of Protestant ministers in the parishes of which they were patrons: but in 1633 Laud cited the feeoffees into the Star Chamber, and roughly put an end to them.

Nor was the persecution confined to the clergy. Under the two last reigns the small pocket-Bibles called the Geneva Bibles had become universally popular amongst English laymen; but their marginal notes were found to savour of Calvinism, and their importation was prohibited. The habit of receiving the communion in a sitting posture had become common, but kneeling was now enforced, and hundreds were excommunicated for refusing to comply with the injunction. A more galling means of annoyance was found in the different views of the two religious parties on the subject of Sunday. The Puritans identified the Lord's day with the Jewish Sabbath, and transferred

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to the one the strict observances which were required for the other. The Laudian clergy, on the other hand, regarded it simply as one among the holidays of the Church, and encouraged their flocks in the pastimes and recreations after service which had been common before the Reformation. The Crown under James had taken part with the latter, and had issued a "Book of Sports" which recommended certain games as lawful and desirable on the Lord's day. The Parliament, as might be expected, was stoutly on the other side, and had forbidden Sunday pastimes by statute. The general religious sense of the country was undoubtedly tending to a stricter observance of the day, when Laud brought the contest to a sudden issue. He summoned the Chief-Justice, Richardson, who had enforced the statute in the western shires, to the Council-table, and rated him so violently that the old man came out complaining he had been all but choked by a pair of lawn sleeves. He then ordered every minister to read the declaration in favour of Sunday pastimes from the pulpit. One Puritan minister had the wit to obey, and to close the reading with the significant hint, "You have heard read, good people, both the commandment of God and the commandment of man! Obey which you please." But the bulk refused to comply with the Archbishop's will. The result followed at which Laud no doubt had aimed. Puritan ministers were cited before the High Commission, and silenced or deprived. In the diocese of Norwich alone thirty parochial clergymen were expelled from their cures.

The suppression of Puritanism in the ranks of the clergy was only a preliminary to the real work on which the Archbishop's mind was set, the preparation for Catholic reunion by the elevation of the clergy to a Catholic standard in doctrine and ritual. Laud publicly avowed his preference of an unmarried to a married priesthood. Some of the bishops, and a large part of the new clergy who occupied the posts from which the Puritan ministers had been driven, advocated doctrines and customs which

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the Reformers had denounced as sheer Papistry; the practice, for instance, of auricular confession, a Real Presence in the Sacrament, or prayers for the dead. One prelate, Montagu, was in heart a convert to Rome. Another, Goodman, died acknowledging himself a Papist. Meanwhile Laud was indefatigable in his efforts to raise the civil and political status of the clergy to the point which it had reached ere the fatal blow of the Reformation fell on the priesthood. Among the archives of his see lies a large and costly volume in vellum, containing a copy of such records in the Tower as concerned the privileges of the clergy. Its compilation was entered in the Archbishop's diary as one among the "twenty-one things which I have projected to do if God bless me in them," and as among the fifteen to which before his fall he had been enabled to add his emphatic "done." The power of the Bishops' Courts, which had long fallen into decay, revived under his patronage. In 1636 he was able to induce the King to raise a prelate, Juxon, Bishop of London, to the highest civil post in the realm, that of Lord High Treasurer. "No Churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time," Laud comments proudly. "I pray God bless him to carry it so that the Church may have honour, and the State service and content by it. And now, if the Church will not hold up themselves, under God I can do no more."

And as Laud aimed at a more Catholic standard of doctrine in the clergy, so he aimed at a nearer approach to the pomp of Catholicism in public worship. His conduct in his own house at Lambeth brings out with singular vividness the reckless courage with which he threw himself across the religious instincts of a time when the spiritual aspect of worship was overpowering in most minds its æsthetic and devotional sides. Men noted as a fatal omen an accident which marked his first entry into Lambeth; for the overlaid ferry-boat upset in the passage of the river, and though the horses and servants were

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saved, the Archbishop's coach remained at the bottom of the Thames. But no omen, carefully as he might note it, brought a moment's hesitation to the bold, narrow mind of the new Primate. His first act, he boasted, was the setting about a restoration of his chapel; and, as Laud managed it, his restoration was a simple undoing of all that had been done there by his predecessors since the Reformation. With characteristic energy he aided with his own hands in the replacement of the painted glass in its windows, and racked his wits in piecing the fragments together. The glazier was scandalized by the Primate's express command to repair and set up again the "broken crucifix" in the east window. The holy table was removed from the centre, and set altarwise against the eastern wall, with a cloth of arras behind it, on which was embroidered the history of the Last Supper. The elaborate woodwork of the screen, the rich copes of the chaplain, the silver candlesticks, the credence table, the organ and the choir, the stately ritual, the bowings at the sacred name, the genuflexions to the altar made the chapel at last such a model of worship as Laud desired. If he could not exact an equal pomp of devotion in other quarters, he exacted as much as he could. Bowing to the altar was introduced into all cathedral churches. A royal injunction ordered the removal of the communion table, which for the last half-century or more had in almost every parish church stood in the middle of the nave. back to its pre-Reformation position in the chancel, and secured it from profanation by a rail. The removal implied, and was understood to imply, a recognition of the Real Presence, and a denial of the doctrine which Englishmen generally held about the Lord's Supper. But, strenuous as was the resistance which the Archbishop encountered, his pertinacity and severity warred it down. Parsons who denounced the change from their pulpits were fined, imprisoned, and deprived of their benefices. Churchwardens who refused or delayed to obey the injunc-

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tion were rated at the Commission-table, and frightened into compliance.

In their last Remonstrance to the King the Commons had denounced Laud as the chief assailant of the Protestant character of the Church of England; and every year of his Primacy showed him bent upon justifying the accusation. His policy was no longer the purely Conservative policy of Parker or Whitgift; it was aggressive and revolutionary. His "new counsels" threw whatever force there was in the feeling of conservatism into the hands of the Puritan, for it was the Puritan who seemed to be defending the old character of the Church of England against its Primate's attacks. But backed as Laud was by the power of the Crown, the struggle became more hopeless every day. While the Catholics owned that they had never enjoyed a like tranquillity, while the fines for recusancy were reduced and their worship suffered to go on in private houses, the Puritan saw his ministers silenced or deprived, his Sabbath profaned, the most sacred act of his worship brought near, as he fancied, to the mass. Roman doctrine met him from the pulpit, Roman practices met him in the Church. It was plain that the purpose of Laud aimed at nothing short of the utter suppression of Puritanism, in other words of the form of religion which was dear to the mass of Englishmen. Already indeed there were signs of a change of temper which might have made a bolder man pause. Thousands of "the best," scholars, merchants, lawyers, farmers, were flying over the Atlantic to seek freedom and purity of religion in the wilderness. Great landowners and nobles were preparing to follow. Ministers were quitting their parsonages rather than abet the royal insult to the sanctity of the Sabbath. The Puritans who remained among the clergy were giving up their homes rather than consent to the change of the sacred table into an altar, or to silence in their protests against the new Popery. The noblest of living Englishmen refused to become the priest of a Church

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whose ministry could only be "bought with servitude and forswearing."

We have seen John Milton leave Cambridge, self-dedicated "to that same lot, however mean or high, to which time leads me and and the will of Heaven." But the lot to which these called him was not the ministerial office to which he had been destined from his childhood. In later life he told bitterly the story how he had been "Church-outed by the prelates." "Coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded in the Church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took with a conscience that would retch he must either straight perjure or split his faith, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." In spite therefore of his father's regrets, he retired in 1633 to a new home which the scrivener had found at Horton, a village in the neighbourhood of Windsor, and quietly busied himself with study and verse. The poetic impulse of the Renaissance had been slowly dying away under the Stuarts. The stage was falling into mere coarseness and horror. Shakspere had died quietly at Stratford in Milton's childhood; the last and worst play of Ben Jonson appeared in the year of his settlement at Horton; and though Ford and Massinger still lingered on, there were no successors for them but Shirley and Davenant. The philosophic and meditative taste of the age had produced indeed poetic schools of its own: poetic satire had become fashionable in Hall, better known afterwards as a bishop, and had been carried on vigorously by George Wither; the so-called "metaphysical" poetry, the vigorous and pithy expression of a cold and prosaic good sense, began with Sir John Davies and buried itself in fantastic affectations in Donne; religious verse had become popular in the gloomy allegories of Quarles and the tender refinement which struggles through a jungle of puns and

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extravagances in George Herbert. But what poetic life really remained was to be found only in the caressing fancy and lively badinage of lyric singers like Herrick, whose grace is untouched by passion and often disfigured by coarseness and pedantry; or in the school of Spenser's more direct successors, where Browne in his pastorals and the two Fletchers, Phineas and Giles, in their unreadable allegories, still preserved something of their master's sweetness, if they preserved nothing of his power.

Milton was himself a Spenserian; he owned to Dryden in later years that "Spenser was his original," and in some of his earliest lines at Horton he dwells lovingly on "the sage and solemn tones" of the "Faerie Queen," its "forests and enchantments drear, where more is meant than meets the ear." But of the weakness and affectation which characterized Spenser's successors he had not a trace. In the "Allegro" and "Penseroso," the first results of his retirement at Horton, we catch again the fancy and melody of the Elizabethan verse, the wealth of its imagery, its wide sympathy with nature and man. There is a loss perhaps of the older freedom and spontaneity of the Renaissance, a rhetorical rather than passionate turn in the young poet, a striking absence of dramatic power, and a want of subtle precision even in his picturesque touches. Milton's imagination is not strong enough to identify him with the world which he imagines; he stands apart from it, and looks at it as from a distance, ordering it and arranging it at his will. But if in this respect he falls both in his earlier and later poems below Shakspere or Spenser, the deficiency is all but compensated by his nobleness of feeling and expression, the severity of his taste, his sustained dignity, and the perfectness and completeness of his work. The moral grandeur of the Puritan breathes, even in these lighter pieces of his youth, through every line. The "Comus," which he planned as a masque for some festivities which the Earl of Bridgewater was

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holding at Ludlow Castle, rises into an almost impassioned pleading for the love of virtue.

The historic interest of Milton's "Comus," lies in its forming part of a protest made by the more cultured Puritans at this time against the gloomier bigotry which persecution was fostering in the party at large. The patience of Englishmen, in fact, was slowly wearing out. There was a sudden upgrowth of virulent pamphlets of the old Martin Marprelate type. Men, whose names no one asked, hawked libels, whose authorship no one knew, from the door of the tradesman to the door of the squire. As the hopes of a Parliament grew fainter, and men despaired of any legal remedy, violent and weak-headed fanatics came, as at such times they always come, to the front. Leighton, the father of the saintly archbishop of that name, had given a specimen of their tone at the outset of this period by denouncing the prelates as men of blood, Episcopacy as Antichrist, and the Popish queen as a daughter of Heth. The "Histrio-mastix" of Prynne, a lawyer distinguished for his constitutional knowledge, but the most obstinate and narrow-minded of men, marked the deepening of Puritan bigotry under the fostering warmth of Laud's persecution. The book was an attack on players as the ministers of Satan, on theatres as the Devil's chapels, on hunting, maypoles, the decking of houses at Christmas with evergreens, on cards, music, and false hair. The attack on the stage was as offensive to the more cultured minds among the Puritan party as to the Court itself; Selden and Whitelock took a prominent part in preparing a grand masque by which the Inns of Court resolved to answer its challenge, and in the following year Milton wrote his masque of "Comus" for Ludlow Castle. To leave Prynne however simply to the censure of wiser men than himself was too sensible a course for the angry Primate. No man was ever sent to prison before or since for such a sheer mass of nonsense; but a passage in the book was taken as a reflection on the Queen, who had

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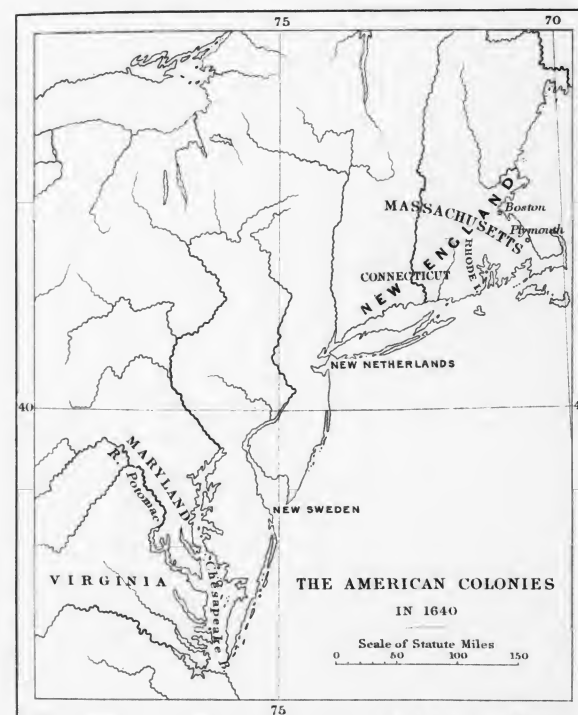
purposed to take part in a play at the time of its publication; and the sentence showed the hard cruelty of the Primate's temper. In 1634 Prynne was dismissed from the bar, deprived of his university degree, and set in the pillory. His ears were clipped from his head, and the stubborn lawyer was then taken back to prison to be kept there during the King's pleasure.

With such a world around them we can hardly wonder that men of less fanatical turn than Prynne gave way to despair. But it was in this hour of despair that the Puritans won their noblest triumph. They "turned," to use Canning's words in a far truer and grander sense than that which he gave to them, "they turned to the New world to redress the balance of the Old." It was during the years which followed the close of the third Parliament of Charles that a great Puritan migration founded the States of New England.

Raleigh's settlement on the Virginian coast, the first attempt which Englishmen had made to claim North America for their own, had soon proved a failure. The introduction of tobacco and the potato into Europe dates from his voyage of discovery, but the energy of his colonists was distracted by the delusive dream of gold, the hostility of the native tribes drove them from the coast, and it is through the gratitude of later times for what he strove to do, rather than for what he did, that Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina, preserves his name. The first permanent settlement on the Chesapeake was effected in the beginning of the reign of James the First, and its success was due to the conviction of the settlers that the secret of the New World's conquest lay simply in labour. Among the hundred and five colonists who originally landed, forty-eight were gentlemen, and only twelve were tillers of the soil. Their leader, John Smith, however not only explored the vast Bay of Chesapeake and discovered the Potomac and the Susquehannah, but held the little company together in the face of famine and

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The Pilgrim Fathers. Only a few years after the settlement of Smith in Virginia, the church of Brownist or Independent refugees, whom we saw driven in Elizabeth's reign to Amsterdam, resolved to quit Holland and find a home in the wilds of the New World. They were little disheartened by the tidings of suffering which came from the Virginian settlement. "We are well weaned," wrote their minister, John Robinson, "from the delicate milk of the mother-country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange land: the people are industrious and frugal. We are knit together as a body in a most sacred covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue whereof we hold ourselves strictly tied to all care of each other's good and of the whole. It is not with us as with men whom small things can discourage." Returning from Holland to Southampton, they started in two small vessels for the new land: but one of these soon put back, and only its companion, the *Mayflower*, a bark of a hundred and eighty tons, with forty-one emigrants and their families on board, persisted in prosecuting its voyage. In 1620 the little company of the "Pilgrim Fathers," as after-times loved to call them, landed on the barren coast of Massachusetts at a spot to which they gave the name of Plymouth, in memory of the last English port at which they touched. They had soon to face the long hard winter of the north, to bear sickness and famine: even when these



London; Macmillan & Co. *Stanford's Geographical Establishment.*

years of toil and suffering had passed there was a time when "they knew not at night where to have a bit in the morning." Resolute and industrious as they were, their progress was very slow; and at the end of ten years they numbered only three hundred souls. But small as it was, the colony was now firmly established and the struggle for mere existence was over. "Let it not be grievous unto you," some of their brethren had written from England to the poor emigrants in the midst of their sufferings, "that you have been instrumental to break the ice for others. The honour shall be yours to the world's end."

From the moment of their establishment the eyes of the English Puritans were fixed on this little Puritan settlement in North America. Through the early years of Charles projects were being canvassed for the establishment of a new settlement beside the little Plymouth; and the aid which the merchants of Boston in Lincolnshire gave to the realization of this project was acknowledged in the name of its capital. At the moment when he was dissolving his third Parliament Charles granted the charter which established the colony of Massachusetts; and by the Puritans at large the grant was at once regarded as a Providential call. Out of the failure of their great constitutional struggle and the pressing danger to "godliness" in England rose the dream of a land in the West where religion and liberty could find a safe and lasting home. The Parliament was hardly dissolved when "conclusions" for the establishment of a great colony on the other side of the Atlantic were circulating among gentry and traders, and descriptions of the new country of Massachusetts were talked over in every Puritan household. The proposal was welcomed with the quiet, stern enthusiasm which marked the temper of the time; but the words of a well-known emigrant show how hard it was even for the sternest enthusiasts to tear themselves from their native land. "I shall call that my country," wrote the younger Winthrop in answer to feelings of this sort, "where

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I may most glorify God and enjoy the presence of my dearest friends." The answer was accepted, and the Puritan emigration began on a scale such as England had never before seen. The two hundred who first sailed for Salem were soon followed by John Winthrop with eight hundred men; and seven hundred more followed ere the first year of personal government had run its course. Nor were the emigrants, like the earlier colonists of the South, "broken men," adventurers, bankrupts, criminals; or simply poor men and artisans, like the Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower*. They were in great part men of the professional and middle classes; some of them men of large landed estate, some zealous clergymen like Cotton, Hooker, and Roger Williams, some shrewd London lawyers, or young scholars from Oxford. The bulk were God-fearing farmers from Lincolnshire and the Eastern counties. They desired in fact "only the best" as sharers in their enterprise; men driven forth from their fatherland not by earthly want, or by the greed of gold, or by the lust of adventure, but by the fear of God, and the zeal for a godly worship. But strong as was their zeal, it was not without a wrench that they tore themselves from their English homes. "Farewell, dear England!" was the cry which burst from the first little company of emigrants as its shores faded from their sight. "Our hearts," wrote Winthrop's followers to the brethren whom they had left behind, "shall be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness."

New
England.

For a while, as the first terrors of persecution died down, there was a lull in the emigration. But no sooner had Laud's system made its pressure felt than again "godly people in England began to apprehend a special hand of Providence in raising this plantation" in Massachusetts; "and their hearts were generally stirred to come over." It was in vain that weaker men returned to bring news of hardships and dangers, and told how two hundred of the new comers had perished with their first winter. A letter

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from Winthrop told how the rest toiled manfully on. "We now enjoy God and Jesus Christ," he wrote to those at home, "and is not that enough? I thank God I like so well to be here as I do not repent my coming. I would not have altered my course though I had foreseen all these afflictions. I never had more content of mind." With the strength and manliness of Puritanism, its bigotry and narrowness crossed the Atlantic too. Roger Williams, a young minister who held the doctrine of freedom of conscience, was driven from the new settlement to become a preacher among the settlers of Rhode Island. The bitter resentment stirred in the emigrants by persecution at home was seen in their abolition of Episcopacy and their prohibition of the use of the Book of Common Prayer. The intensity of its religious sentiments turned the colony into a theocracy. "To the end that the body of the Commons may be preserved of honest and good men, it was ordered and agreed that for the time to come no man shall be admitted to the freedom of the body politic but such as are members of some of the churches within the bounds of the same." But the fiercer mood which persecution was begetting in the Puritans only welcomed this bigotry. As years went by and the contest grew hotter at home, the number of emigrants rose fast. Three thousand new colonists arrived from England in a single year. Between the sailing of Winthrop's expedition and the assembling of the Long Parliament, in the space, that is, of ten or eleven years, two hundred emigrant ships had crossed the Atlantic, and twenty thousand Englishmen had found a refuge in the West.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISING OF THE SCOTS.

1635—1640.

*England
in 1635.*

WHEN Weston died in 1635 six years had passed without a Parliament, and the Crown was at the height of its power. Its financial difficulties seemed coming to an end. The long peace, the rigid economy of administration, the use of forgotten rights and vexatious monopolies, had now halved the amount of debt, while they had raised the revenue to a level with the royal expenditure. Charles had no need of subsidies; and without the need of subsidies he saw no ground for again encountering the opposition of Parliament. The religious difficulty gave him as little anxiety. If Laud was taking harsh courses with the Puritans, he seemed to be successful in his struggle with Puritanism. The most able among its ministers were silenced or deprived. The most earnest of its laymen were flying over seas. But there was no show of opposition to the reforms of the Primate or the High Commission. In the two dependent kingdoms all appeared to be going well. In Scotland Charles had begun quietly to carry further his father's schemes for religious uniformity; but there was no voice of protest. In Ireland Wentworth could point to a submissive Parliament and a well-equipped army, ready to serve the King on either side St. George's Channel. The one solitary anxiety of Charles, in fact, lay in the aspect of foreign affairs. The union of Holland and of France had done

the work that England had failed to do in saving German Protestantism from the grasp of the House of Austria. But if their union was of service to Germany, it brought danger to England. France was its ancient foe. The commercial supremacy of the Dutch was threatening English trade. The junction of their fleets would at once enable them to challenge the right of dominion which England claimed over the Channel. And at this moment rumours came of a scheme of partition by which the Spanish Netherlands were to be shared between the French and the Dutch, and by which Dunkirk was at once to be attacked and given into the hands of France.

To suffer the extension of France along the shores of the Netherlands had seemed impossible to English statesmen from the days of Elizabeth. To surrender the command of the Channel was equally galling to the national pride. Even Weston, fond as he was of peace, had seen the need of putting a strong fleet upon the seas; and in 1634 Spain engaged to defray part of the expense of equipping such a fleet in the hope that the King's demand would bring on war with Holland and with France. But money had to be found at home, and as Charles would not hear of the gathering of a Parliament means had to be got by a new stretch of prerogative. The legal research of Noy, one of the law-officers of the Crown, found precedents among the records in the Tower for the provision of ships for the King's use by the port-towns of the kingdom, and for the furnishing of their equipment by the maritime counties. The precedents dated from times when no permanent fleet existed, and when sea warfare could only be waged by vessels lent for the moment by the various ports. But they were seized as a means of equipping a permanent navy without cost to the exchequer; the first demand of ships was soon commuted into a demand of money for the provision of ships; and the writs for the payment of ship-money which were issued to London and other coast-towns were enforced by fine and imprisonment. The money

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Ship-money.

CHAP. VII. was paid, and in 1635 a fleet put to sea. The Spaniards however were too poor to fulfil their share of the bargain; they sent neither money nor vessels; and Charles shrank from a contest single-handed with France and the Dutch. But with the death of the Earl of Portland a bolder hand seized the reins of power. To Laud as to Wentworth the system of Weston had hardly seemed government at all. In the correspondence which passed between the two ministers the King was censured as over-cautious, the Star Chamber as feeble, the judges as over-scrupulous. "I am for Thorough," the one writes to the other in alternate fits of impatience at the slow progress they are making. Wentworth was anxious that his good work might not "be spoiled on that side." Laud echoed the wish, while he envied the free course of the Lord Lieutenant. "You have a good deal of humour here," he writes, "for your proceeding. Go on a' God's name. I have done with expecting of Thorough on this side."

*The new
Ship-money.*

With feelings such as these Laud no sooner took the direction of affairs than a more vigorous and unscrupulous impulse made itself felt. Far from being drawn from his projects by the desertion of Spain, Charles was encouraged to carry them out by his own efforts. It was determined to strengthen the fleet; and funds for this purpose were raised by an extension of the levy of ship-money. The pretence of precedents was thrown aside, and Laud resolved to find a permanent revenue in the conversion of the "ship-money," till now levied on ports and the maritime counties, into a general tax imposed by the royal will upon the whole country. The sum expected from the tax was no less than a quarter of a million a year. "I know no reason," Wentworth had written significantly, "but you may as well rule the common lawyers in England as I, poor beagle, do here;" and the judges no sooner declared the new impost to be legal than he drew the logical deduction from their decision. "Since it is lawful for the King to impose a tax for the equipment of the navy, it must be

equally so for the levy of an army: and the same reason which authorizes him to levy an army to resist, will authorize him to carry that army abroad that he may prevent invasion. Moreover what is law in England is law also in Scotland and Ireland. The decision of the judges will therefore make the King absolute at home and formidable abroad. Let him only abstain from war for a few years that he may habituate his subjects to the payment of that tax, and in the end he will find himself more powerful and respected than any of his predecessors." "The debt of the Crown being taken off," he wrote to Charles, "you may govern at your will."

But there were men who saw the danger to freedom in this levy of ship-money as clearly as Wentworth himself. The bulk of the country party abandoned all hope of English freedom. There was a sudden revival of the emigration to New England; and men of blood and fortune now prepared to seek a new home in the West. Lord Warwick secured the proprietorship of the Connecticut valley. Lord Saye and Sele and Lord Brooke began negotiations for transporting themselves to the New World. Oliver Cromwell is said, by a doubtful tradition, to have only been prevented from crossing the seas by a royal embargo. It is more certain that John Hampden purchased a tract of land on the Narragansett. No visionary danger would have brought the soul of Hampden to the thought of flight. He was sprung of an ancient line, which had been true to the House of Lancaster in the Wars of the Roses, and whose fidelity had been rewarded by the favour of the Tudors. On the brow of the Chilterns an opening in the woods has borne the name of "the Queen's Gap" ever since Griffith Hampden cleared an avenue for one of Elizabeth's visits to his stately home. His grandson, John, was born at the close of the Queen's reign; the dissipations of youth were cut short by an early marriage at twenty-five to a wife he loved; and the young squire settled down to a life of study and religion. His

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*John
Hampden.*

CHAP. VII. wealth and lineage opened to him a career such as other men were choosing at the Stuart court. Few English commoners had wider possessions; and under James it was easy to purchase a peerage by servility and hard cash. "If my son will seek for his honour," wrote his mother from the court, "tell him now to come, for here are multitudes of lords-a-making!" But Hampden had nobler aims than a peerage. From the first his choice was made to stand by the side of those who were struggling for English freedom; and at the age of twenty-six he took his seat in the memorable Parliament of 1620. Young as he was, his ability at once carried him to the front; he was employed in "managing conferences with the Lords" and other weighty business, and became the friend of Eliot and of Pym. He was again returned to the two first Parliaments of Charles; and his firm refusal to contribute to forced loans at the close of the second marked the quiet firmness of his temper. "I could be content to lead," he replied to the demand of the Council, "but for fear to draw on myself that curse in Magna Charta which should be read twice a year against those that do infringe it." He was rewarded with so close an imprisonment in the Tower, "that he never afterwards did look the same man he was before." But a prison had no force to bend the steady patriotism of John Hampden, and he again took a prominent part in the Parliament of 1628, especially on the religious questions which came under debate.

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With the dissolution of this Parliament Hampden again withdrew to his home, the home that, however disguised by tasteless changes without, still stands unaltered within on a rise of the Chilterns, its Elizabethan hall girt round with galleries and stately staircases winding up beneath shadowy portraits in ruffs and farthingales. Around are the quiet undulations of the chalk-country, billowy heavings and sinkings as of some primæval sea suddenly hushed into motionlessness, soft slopes of grey grass or brown-red corn falling gently to dry bottoms, woodland

flung here and there in masses over the hills. A country of fine and lucid air, of far shadowy distances, of hollows tenderly veiled by mist, graceful everywhere with a flowing unaccentuated grace, as though Hampden's own temper had grown out of it. As we look on it, we recall the "flowing courtesy to all men," the "seeming humility and submission of judgment," the "rare affability and temper in debate," that woke admiration and regard even in the fiercest of his opponents. But beneath the outer grace of Hampden's demeanour lay a soul of steel. Buried as he seemed in the affections of his home, the great patriot waited patiently for the hour of freedom that he knew must come. Around him gathered the men that were to stand by his side in the future struggle. He had been the bosom friend of Eliot till the victim of the King's resentment lay dead in the Tower. He was now the bosom-friend of Pym. His mother had been a daughter of the great Cromwell house at Hitchinbrooke, and he was thus closely linked by blood to Oliver Cromwell and more distantly to Oliver St. John. The marriages of two daughters united him to the Knightleys and the Lynes. Selden and Whitelock were among his closest counsellors. It was in steady commune with these that the years passed by, while outer eyes saw in him only a Puritan squire of a cultured sort, popular among his tenantry and punctual at Quarter-Sessions, with "an exceeding propenseness to field sports" and "busy in the embellishment of his estate, of which he was very fond."

At last the quiet patience was broken by the news of the ship-money, and of a writ addressed to the High Sheriff, Sir Peter Temple of Stave, ordering him to raise £4,500 on the county of Buckingham. Hampden's resolve was soon known. In the January of 1636 a return was made of the payments for ship-money from the village of Great Kimble at the foot of the Chilterns round which his chief property lay, and at the head of those who refused to pay stood the name of John Hampden.

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For a while matters moved slowly; and it was not till the close of June that a Council warrant summoned the High Sheriff to account for arrears. Hampden meanwhile had been taking counsel in the spring with Whitelock and others of his friends concerning the means of bringing the matter to a legal issue. Charles was as eager to appeal to the law as Hampden himself; but he followed his father's usage in privately consulting the judges on the subject of his claim, and it was not till the February of 1637 that their answer asserted its legality. The King at once made their opinion public in the faith that all resistance would cease. But the days were gone by when the voice of the judges was taken submissively for law by Englishmen. They had seen the dismissal of Coke and of Crewe. They knew that in matters of the prerogative the judges admitted a right of interference and of dictation on the part of the Crown. "The judges," Sir Harbottle Grimston could say in the Long Parliament, "the judges have overthrown the law, as the bishops religion!" What Hampden aimed at was not the judgement of such judges, but an open trial where England might hear, in spite of the silence of Parliament, a discussion of this great inroad on its freedom. His wishes were realized at last by the issue in May of a writ from the Exchequer, calling on him to show cause why payment of ship-money for his lands should not be made.

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and
Scotland.

The news of Hampden's resistance thrilled through the country at a moment when men were roused by news of resistance in the north. Since the accession of James Scotland had bent with a seeming tameness before aggression after aggression. Its pulpits had been bridled. Its boldest ministers had been sent into exile. Its General Assembly had been brought to submission by the Crown. Its Church had been forced to accept bishops, if not with all their old powers, still with authority as permanent superintendents of the diocesan synods. The ministers and elders had been deprived of their right of excommunicating offenders, save with a bishop's sanction. A

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Court of High Commission enforced the supremacy of the Crown. But with this enforcement of his royal authority James was content. He had no wish for a doctrinal change, or for the bringing about of a strict uniformity with the Church of England. It was in vain that Laud in his earlier days invited James to draw his Scotch subjects "to a nearer conjunction with the liturgy and canons of this nation." "I sent him back again," said the shrewd old King, "with the frivolous draft he had drawn. For all that, he feared not my anger, but assaulted me again with another ill-fangled platform to make that stubborn Kirk stoop more to the English platform; but I durst not play fast and loose with my word. He knows not the stomach of that people." The earlier policy of Charles followed his father's line of action. It effected little save a partial restoration of Church-lands, which the lords were forced to surrender. But Laud's vigorous action made itself felt. His first acts were directed rather to points of outer observance than to any attack on the actual fabric of Presbyterian organization. The estates were induced to withdraw the control of ecclesiastical apparel from the Assembly, and to commit it to the Crown; and this step was soon followed by a resumption of their episcopal costume on the part of the Scotch bishops. When the Bishop of Moray preached before Charles in his rochet, on the King's visit to Edinburgh in 1633, it was the first instance of its use since the Reformation. The innovation was followed by the issue of a Royal warrant which directed all ministers to use the surplice in divine worship.

The enforcement of the surplice woke Scotland from its torpor, and alarm at once spread through the country. Quarterly meetings were held in parishes with fasting and prayer to consult on the dangers which threatened religion, and ministers who conformed to the new ceremonies were rebuked and deserted by their congregations. The popular discontent soon found leaders in the Scotch nobles. Threatened in power by the attempts of the

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CHAP. VII. Crown to narrow their legal jurisdiction, in pursuance by projects for the resumption and restoration to the Church of the bishops' lands, irritated by the restoration of the prelates to their old rank, by their reintroduction to Parliament and the Council, by the nomination of Archbishop Spottiswood to the post of Chancellor, and above all by the setting up again the worrying bishops' courts, the nobles with Lord Lorne at their head stood sullenly aloof from the new system. But Charles was indifferent to the discontent which his measures were rousing. Under Laud's pressure he was resolved to put an end to the Presbyterian character of the Scotch Church altogether, and to bring it to a uniformity with the Church of England in organization and ritual. With this view a book of Canons was issued in 1636 on the sole authority of the King. These Canons placed the government of the Church absolutely in the hands of its bishops; and made a bishop's licence necessary for instruction and for the publication of books. The authority of the prelates indeed was jealously subordinated to the supremacy of the Crown. No Church Assembly might be summoned but by the King, no alteration in worship or discipline introduced but by his permission. As daring a stretch of the prerogative superseded what was known as Knox's Liturgy—the book of Common Order drawn up on the Genevan model by that Reformer, and generally used throughout Scotland—by a new Liturgy based on the English Book of Common Prayer.

Its rejection. The Liturgy and Canons had been Laud's own handiwork; in their composition the General Assembly had neither been consulted nor recognized; and taken together they formed the code of a political and ecclesiastical system which aimed at reducing Scotland to an utter subjection to the Crown. To enforce them on the land was to effect a revolution of the most serious kind. The books however were backed by a royal injunction, and Laud flattered himself that the revolution had been wrought. But the patience of Scotland found an end at last. In

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the summer of 1637, while England was waiting for the opening of the great cause of ship-money, peremptory orders from the King forced the clergy of Edinburgh to introduce the new service into their churches. On the 23rd of July the Prayer Book was used at the church of St. Giles. But the book was no sooner opened than a murmur ran through the congregation, and the murmur grew into a formidable riot. The church was cleared, and the service read; but the rising discontent frightened the judges into a decision that the royal writ enjoined the purchase, not the use, of the Prayer Book, and its use was at once discontinued. The angry orders which came from England for its restoration were met by a shower of protests from every part of Scotland. The ministers of Fife pleaded boldly the want of any confirmation of the book by a General Assembly. "This Church," they exclaimed, "is a free and independent Church, just as this kingdom is a free and independent kingdom." The Duke of Lennox alone took sixty-eight petitions with him to the Court; while ministers, nobles, and gentry poured into Edinburgh to organize a national resistance.

The effect of these events in Scotland was at once seen in the open demonstration of discontent south of the border. The prison with which Laud had rewarded Prynne's enormous folio had tamed his spirit so little that a new tract, written within its walls, denounced the bishops as devouring wolves and lords of Lucifer. A fellow-prisoner, John Bastwick, declared in his "Litany" that "Hell was broke loose, and the devils in surplices, hoods, copes, and rochets were come amongst us." Burton, a London clergyman silenced by the High Commission, called on all Christians to resist the bishops as "robbers of souls, limbs of the beast, and factors of Antichrist." Raving of this sort might well have been passed by, had not the general sympathy with Prynne and his fellow pamphleteers, when Laud dragged them in 1637 before the Star Chamber as "trumpets of sedition," shown how fast the tide of general anger

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CHAP. VII. against the Government was rising. The four culprits
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1640. listened with defiance to their sentence of exposure in
the pillory and imprisonment for life; and the crowd who
filled Palace Yard to witness their punishment groaned
at the cutting off of their ears, and "gave a great shout"
when Prynne urged that the sentence on him was contrary
to law. A hundred thousand Londoners lined the road
as they passed on the way to prison; and the journey of
these "Martyrs," as the spectators called them, was like
a triumphal progress. Startled as he was at the sudden
burst of popular feeling, Laud remained dauntless as ever.
Prynne's entertainers, as he passed through the country,
were summoned before the Star Chamber, while the cen-
sorship struck fiercer blows at the Puritan press. But the
real danger lay not in the libels of silly zealots, but in the
attitude of Scotland, and in the effect which was being
produced in England at large by the trial of Hampden.
Wentworth was looking on from Ireland with cool inso-
lence at the contest between a subject and the Crown.
"Mr. Hampden," he wrote, "is a great brother; and the
genius of that faction of people leads them always to
oppose, both civilly and ecclesiastically, all that ever
authority ordains." But England looked on with other
eyes. "The eyes of all men," owns Clarendon, "were
fixed upon him as their *Pater Patriæ* and the pilot who
must steer the vessel through the tempests and storms
that threatened it." In November and December, 1637,
the cause of ship-money was solemnly argued for twelve
days before the full bench of judges. It was proved that
the tax in past times had been levied only in cases of
sudden emergency, and confined to the coast and port
towns alone, and that even the show of legality had been
taken from it by formal statute, and by the Petition of
Right.

The
Judgement
on
Ship-money. The case was adjourned, but its discussion told not
merely on England, but on the temper of the Scots.
Charles had replied to their petitions by a simple order

to all strangers to leave the capital. But the Council at CHAP. VII.
Edinburgh was unable to enforce his order; and the The Rising
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1640. nobles and gentry before dispersing to their homes peti-
tioned against the bishops, resolved not to own the juris-
diction of their courts, and named in November, 1637, a
body of delegates, under the odd title of "the Tables."
These delegates carried on through the winter a series
of negotiations with the Crown. The negotiations were
interrupted in the spring of 1638 by a renewed order for
their dispersion, and for the acceptance of a Prayer Book;
while the judges in England delivered in June their long-
delayed decision on Hampden's case. Two judges only
pronounced in his favour; though three followed them on
technical grounds. The majority, seven in number, laid down
the broad principle that no statute prohibiting arbitrary
taxation could be pleaded against the King's will. "I never
read or heard," said Judge Berkley, "that *lex* was *rex*, but
it is common and most true that *rex* is *lex*." Finch, the
Chief-Justice, summed up the opinions of his fellow judges.
"Acts of Parliament to take away the King's royal power
in the defence of his kingdom are void," he said: "they
are void Acts of Parliament to bind the King not to
command the subjects, their persons, and goods, and I
say their money too, for no Acts of Parliament make
any difference."

The case was ended; and Charles looked for the The
Covenant. Puritans to give way. But keener eyes discerned
that a new spirit of resistance had been stirred by
the trial. The insolence of Wentworth was exchanged
for a tone of angry terror. "I wish Mr. Hampden and
others to his likeness," the Lord Deputy wrote bitterly
from Ireland, "were well whipt into their right senses."
Amidst the exultation of the Court over the decision of the
judges, Wentworth saw clearly that Hampden's work had
been done. Legal and temperate as his course had been, he
had roused England to a sense of the danger to her freedom,
and forced into light the real character of the royal claims.

CHAP. VII. How stern and bitter the temper even of the noblest Puritans had become at last we see in the poem which Milton produced at this time, his elegy of "Lycidas." Its grave and tender lament is broken by a sudden flash of indignation at the dangers around the Church, at the "blind mouths that scarce themselves know how to hold a sheep-hook," and to whom "the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed," while "the grim wolf" of Rome "with privy paw daily devours apace, and nothing said!" The stern resolve of the people to demand justice on their tyrants spoke in his threat of the axe. Strafford and Laud, and Charles himself, had yet to reckon with "that two-handed engine at the door" which stood "ready to smite once, and smite no more." But stern as was the general resolve, there was no need for immediate action, for the difficulties which were gathering in the north were certain to bring a strain on the Government which would force it to seek support from the people. The King's demand for immediate submission, which reached Scotland while England was waiting for the Hampden judgement, in the spring of 1638, gathered the whole body of remonstrants together round "the Tables" at Stirling; and a protestation, read at Edinburgh, was followed, on Johnston of Warriston's suggestion, by a renewal of the Covenant with God which had been drawn up and sworn to in a previous hour of peril, when Mary was still plotting against Protestantism, and Spain was preparing its Armada. "We promise and swear," ran the solemn engagement at its close, "by the great name of the Lord our God, to continue in the profession and obedience of the said religion, and that we shall defend the same, and resist all their contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation and the utmost of that power which God has put into our hands all the days of our life."

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and
Scotland.

The Covenant was signed in the churchyard of the Grey Friars at Edinburgh on the first of March, in a tumult of enthusiasm, "with such content and joy as those who,

having long before been outlaws and rebels, are admitted again into covenant with God." Gentlemen and nobles rode with the documents in their pockets over the country, gathering subscriptions to it, while the ministers pressed for a general consent to it from the pulpit. But pressure was needless. "Such was the zeal of subscribers that for a while many subscribed with tears on their cheeks;" some were indeed reputed to have "drawn their own blood and used it in place of ink to underwrite their names." The force given to Scottish freedom by this revival of religious fervour was seen in the new tone adopted by the Covenanters. The Marquis of Hamilton, who came as Royal Commissioner to put an end to the quarrel, was at once met by demands for an abolition of the Court of High Commission, the withdrawal of the Books of Canons and Common Prayer, a free Parliament, and a free General Assembly. He threatened war; but the threat proved fruitless, and even the Scotch Council pressed Charles to give fuller satisfaction to the people. "I will rather die," the King wrote to Hamilton, "than yield to these impertinent and damnable demands;" but it was needful to gain time. "The discontents at home," wrote Lord Northumberland to Wentworth, "do rather increase than lessen;" and Charles was without money or men. It was in vain that he begged for a loan from Spain on promise of declaring war against Holland, or that he tried to procure two thousand troops from Flanders, with which to occupy Edinburgh. The loan and troops were both refused, and some contributions offered by the English Catholics did little to recruit the Exchequer.

Charles had directed the Marquis to delay any decisive breach till the royal fleet appeared in the Forth; but it was hard to equip a fleet at all. Scotland in fact was sooner ready for war than the King. The Scotch volunteers who had been serving in the Thirty Years' War streamed home at the call of their brethren; and General Leslie, a veteran trained under Gustavus, came from

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CHAP. VII. Sweden to take the command of the new forces. A voluntary war tax was levied in every shire. Charles was so utterly taken by surprize that he saw no choice but to yield, if but for the moment, to the Scottish demands. Hamilton announced that the King allowed the Covenant, the service book was revoked; a pledge was given that the power of the bishops should be lessened; a Parliament was promised for the coming year; and a General Assembly summoned at once. The Assembly met at Glasgow in November 1638; it had been chosen according to the old form which James had annulled, and its 144 ministers were backed by 96 lay elders amongst whom all the leading Covenanters found a place. They had hardly met when, at the news of their design to attack the Bishops, Hamilton declared the Assembly dissolved. But the Church claimed its old freedom of meeting apart from any licence from Kings; and by an almost unanimous vote the Assembly resolved to continue its session. Its acts were an undoing of all that the Stuarts had done. The two books of Canons and Common Prayer, the High Commission, the Articles of Perth, were all set aside as invalid. Episcopacy was abjured, the bishops were deposed from their office, and the system of Presbyterianism re-established in its fullest extent.

*The
Scotch
War.*

Scotland was fighting England's battle as well as her own. The bold assertion of a people's right to frame its own religion was a practical carrying out of the claim which had been made by the English Parliament of 1629. But Charles was as resolute to resist it now as then. He was firm in his resolve of war, and the strong remonstrances of his Scotch councillors against it were met by a fierce pressure from Wentworth and Laud. Both felt that the question had ceased to be one for Scotland only; they saw that a concession to the Scots must now be fatal to the political and ecclesiastical system they had built up in Ireland and England alike. In both countries those who opposed the Government were looking to the rising in the North. They

were suspicious of correspondence between the Puritans in England and the Scotch leaders; and whether these suspicions were true or no, of the sympathy with which the proceedings at Edinburgh were watched south of the border there could be little doubt. It was with the conviction that the whole Stuart system was at stake that the two ministers pressed for war. But angered as he was, Charles was a Scotchman, and a Scotch king; and he shrank from a march with English troops into his hereditary kingdom. He counted rather on the sympathy of the northern clans and of Huntly, on the impression produced by the appearance of Hamilton with a fleet in the Forth, and by the suspension of trade with Holland, than on any actual force of arms from the South. The 20,000 men he gathered at York were to serve rather as a demonstration, and to protect the border, than as an invading force. But again his plans broke down before the activity and resolution of the Scots. The news that Charles was gathering an army at York, and reckoning for support on the clans of the north, was answered in the spring of 1639 by the seizure of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Stirling; while 10,000 well-equipped troops under Leslie and the Earl of Montrose entered Aberdeen, and brought the Earl of Huntly a prisoner to the south. Instead of overawing the country, the appearance of the royal fleet in the Forth was the signal for Leslie's march with 20,000 men to the Border. Charles had hardly pushed across the Tweed, when the "old little crooked soldier," encamping on the hill of Dunse Law, a few miles from Berwick, fairly offered him battle.

The King's threats at once broke down. Charles had a somewhat stronger force than Leslie, but his men had no will to fight; and he was forced to evade a battle by consenting to the gathering of a free Assembly and of a Scotch Parliament. But he had no purpose of being bound by terms which had been wrested from him by rebel subjects. In his eyes the pacification at Berwick was a mere suspension of arms; and the King's summons of Wentworth from

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Ireland was a proof that violent measures were in preparation. The Scotch leaders were far from deceiving themselves as to the King's purpose; and in the struggle which they foresaw they sought aid from a power which Scotch tradition had looked on for centuries as the natural ally of their country. The jealousy between France and England had long been smouldering, and only the weakness of Charles and the caution of Richelieu had prevented its bursting into open flame. In the weary negotiations which the English King still carried on for the restoration of his nephew to the Palatinate, he had till now been counting rather on the friendly mediation of Spain with the Emperor than on any efforts of France or its Protestant allies. At this moment however a strange piece of fortune brought about a sudden change in his policy. A Spanish fleet, which had been attacked by the Dutch in the Channel, took refuge under the guns of Dover; and Spain appealed for its protection to the friendship of the King. But Charles saw in the incident a chance of winning the Palatinate without a blow. He at once opened negotiations with Richelieu. He offered to suffer the Spanish vessels to be destroyed, if France would pledge itself to restore his nephew. Richelieu on the other hand would only consent to his restoration if Charles would take an active part in the war. But the negotiations were suddenly cut short by the daring of the Dutch. In spite of the King's threats they attacked the Spanish fleet as it lay in English waters, and drove it broken to Ostend. Such an act of defiance could only embitter the enmity which Charles already felt towards France and its Dutch allies; and Richelieu grasped gladly at the Scotch revolt as a means of hindering England from joining in the war. His agents opened communications with the Scottish leaders; and applications for its aid was forwarded by the Scots to the French court.

The Short
Parliament.

The discovery of this correspondence roused anew the hopes of the King. He was resolved not to yield to

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rebels; and the proceedings in Scotland since the pacification of Berwick seemed to him mere rebellion. A fresh General Assembly adopted as valid the acts of its predecessor. The Parliament only met to demand that the council should be responsible to it for its course of government. The King prorogued both that he might use the weapon which fortune had thrown into his hand. He never doubted that if he appealed to the country English loyalty would rise to support him against Scottish treason. He yielded at last to the counsels of Wentworth. Wentworth was still for war. He had never ceased to urge that the Scots should be whipped back to their border; and the King now avowed his concurrence in this policy by raising him to the Earldom of Strafford, and from the post of Lord Deputy to that of Lord Lieutenant. Strafford agreed with Charles that a Parliament should be summoned, the correspondence laid before it, and advantage taken of the burst of indignation on which the King counted to procure a heavy subsidy. But he had foreseen that it might refuse all aid; and in such a case the Earl and the Council held that the King would have a right to fall back on "extraordinary means." Strafford himself hurried to Ireland to read a practical lesson to the English Parliament. In fourteen days he had procured four subsidies from the Irish Commons, and set on foot a force of 8,000 men to take part in the attack on the Scots. He came back, flushed with his success, in time for the meeting of the Houses at Westminster in the middle of April 1640. But the lesson failed in its effect. Statesmen like Hampden and Pym were not fools enough to aid the great enemy of English freedom against men who had risen for freedom across the Tweed. Every member of the Commons knew that Scotland was fighting the battle of English liberty. All hope of bringing them to any attack upon the Scots proved fruitless. The intercepted letters were quietly set aside; and the Commons declared as of old that redress of grievances must precede any grant of supplies. No

CHAP. VII. subsidy could be granted till security was had for religion, for property, and for the liberties of Parliament. An offer to relinquish ship-money proved fruitless; and after three weeks sitting the "Short Parliament" was dissolved. "Things must go worse before they go better" was the cool comment of St. John. But the country was strangely moved. After eleven years of personal rule, its hopes had risen again with the summons of the Houses to Westminster; and their rough dismissal after a three weeks sitting brought all patience to an end. "So great a defection in the kingdom," wrote Lord Northumberland, "hath not been known in the memory of man."

*The
Bishops'
War.*

Strafford alone stood undaunted. He had provided for the resolve of the Parliament by the decision of the Council that in such a case the King might resort to "extraordinary means;" and he now urged that by the act of the Commons Charles was "freed from all rule of government," and entitled to supply himself at his will. The Irish army, he said, was at the King's command, and Scotland could be subdued in a single summer. He was bent, in fact, on war; and he took command of the royal army, which again advanced to the north. But the Scots were as ready for war as Strafford. As early as March they had reassembled their army; and their Parliament commissioned the Committee of Estates, of which Argyle was the most influential member, to carry on the government. Encouraged by the refusal of the English Houses to grant supplies, they now published a new manifesto and resolved to meet the march of Strafford's army by an advance into England. On the twentieth of August the Scotch army crossed the border; Montrose being the first to set foot on English soil. Forcing the passage of the Tyne in the face of an English detachment, they occupied Newcastle, and despatched from that town their proposals of peace. They prayed the King to consider their grievances, and "with the advice and consent of the Estates of England convened in Parliament, to settle a firm and desirable peace." The

prayer was backed by preparations for a march upon York, where Charles had abandoned himself to despair. The warlike bluster of Strafford had broken utterly down the moment he attempted to take the field. His troops were a mere mob; and neither by threats nor prayers could the Earl recall them to their duty. He was forced to own that two months were needed before they could be fit for action. Charles was driven again to open negotiations with the Scots, and to buy a respite in their advance by a promise of pay for their army and by leaving Northumberland and Durham in their hands as pledges for the fulfilment of his engagements. But the truce only met half his difficulties. Behind him England was all but in revolt. The Treasury was empty, and London and the East India merchants alike refused a loan. The London apprentices mobbed Laud at Lambeth, and broke up the sittings of the High Commission at St. Paul's. The war was denounced everywhere as "the Bishops' War," and the new levies murdered officers whom they suspected of Papistry, broke down altar-rails in every church they passed, and deserted to their homes. To all but Strafford it was plain that the system of Charles had broken hopelessly down. Two peers, Lord Wharton and Lord Howard, ventured to lay before the King himself a petition for peace with the Scots; and though Strafford arrested and proposed to shoot them as mutineers, the English Council shrank from desperate courses. But if desperate courses were not taken, there was nothing for it but to give way. Penniless, without an army, with a people all but in revolt, the obstinate temper of the King still strove to escape from the humiliation of calling a Parliament. He summoned a Great Council of the Peers at York. But his project broke down before its general repudiation by the nobles; and with wrath and shame at his heart Charles was driven to summon again the Houses to Westminster.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

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*John
Pym.*

IF Strafford embodied the spirit of tyranny, John Pym, the leader of the Commons from the first meeting of the new Houses at Westminster, stands out for all after time as the embodiment of law. A Somersetshire gentleman of good birth and competent fortune, he entered on public life in the Parliament of 1614, and was imprisoned for his patriotism at its close. He had been a leading member in that of 1620, and one of the "twelve ambassadors" for whom James ordered chairs to be set at Whitehall. Of the band of patriots with whom he had stood side by side in the constitutional struggle against the earlier despotism of Charles he was almost the one survivor. Coke had died of old age; Cotton's heart was broken by oppression; Eliot had perished in the Tower; Wentworth had apostatized. But Pym remained, resolute, patient as of old; and as the sense of his greatness grew silently during the eleven years of deepening misrule, the hope and faith of better things clung almost passionately to the man who never doubted of the final triumph of freedom and the law. At their close, Clarendon tells us, in words all the more notable for their bitter tone of hate, "he was the most popular man, and the most able to do hurt, that have lived at any time." He had shown he knew how to wait, and when waiting was over he showed he knew

how to act. On the eve of the Long Parliament he rode through England to quicken the electors to a sense of the crisis which had come at last; and on the assembling of the Commons he took his place, not merely as member for Tavistock, but as their acknowledged head. Few of the country gentlemen indeed who formed the bulk of the members, had sat in any previous House; and of the few none represented in so eminent a way the Parliamentary tradition on which the coming struggle was to turn. Pym's eloquence, inferior in boldness and originality to that of Eliot or Wentworth, was better suited by its massive and logical force to convince and guide a great party; and it was backed by a calmness of temper, a dexterity and order in the management of public business, and a practical power of shaping the course of debate, which gave a form and method to Parliamentary proceedings such as they had never had before.

Valuable however as these qualities were, it was a yet higher quality which raised Pym into the greatest, as he was the first, of Parliamentary leaders. Of the five hundred members who sate round him at St. Stephen's, he was the one man who had clearly foreseen, and as clearly resolved how to meet, the difficulties which lay before them. It was certain that Parliament would be drawn into a struggle with the Crown. It was probable that in such a struggle the House of Commons would be hampered, as it had been hampered before, by the House of Lords. The legal antiquarians of the older constitutional school stood helpless before such a conflict of co-ordinate powers, a conflict for which no provision had been made by the law, and on which precedents threw only a doubtful and conflicting light. But with a knowledge of precedent as great as their own, Pym rose high above them in his grasp of constitutional principles. He was the first English statesman who discovered, and applied to the political circumstances around him, what may be called the doctrine of constitutional proportion. He saw that as an element of

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*His
political
theory.*

CH. VIII. constitutional life Parliament was of higher value than
 The Long Parliament. 1640-1644. the Crown; he saw too that in Parliament itself the one essential part was the House of Commons. On these two facts he based his whole policy in the contest which followed. When Charles refused to act with the Parliament, Pym treated the refusal as a temporary abdication on the part of the sovereign, which vested the executive power in the two Houses until new arrangements were made. When the Lords obstructed public business, he warned them that obstruction would only force the Commons "to save the kingdom alone." Revolutionary as these principles seemed at the time, they have both been recognized as bases of our constitution since the days of Pym. The first principle was established by the Convention and Parliament which followed on the departure of James the Second; the second by the acknowledgement on all sides since the Reform Bill of 1832 that the government of the country is really in the hands of the House of Commons, and can only be carried on by ministers who represent the majority of that House.

His political genius

It was thus that the work of Pym brought about a political revolution greater than any that England has ever experienced since his day. But the temper of Pym was the very opposite of the temper of a revolutionist. Few natures have ever been wider in their range of sympathy or action. Serious as his purpose was, his manners were genial and even courtly; he turned easily from an invective against Strafford to a chat with Lady Carlisle; and the grace and gaiety of his social tone, even when the care and weight of public affairs were bringing him to his grave, gave rise to a hundred silly scandals among the prurient royalists. It was this striking combination of genial versatility with a massive force in his nature which marked him out from the first moment of power as a born ruler of men. He proved himself at once the subtlest of diplomatists and the grandest of demagogues. He was equally at home in tracking the subtle intricacies of

royalist intrigues, or in kindling popular passion with words of fire. Though past middle life when his work really began, for he was born in 1584, four years before the coming of the Armada, he displayed from the first meeting of the Long Parliament the qualities of a great administrator, an immense faculty for labour, a genius for organization, patience, tact, a power of inspiring confidence in all whom he touched, calmness and moderation under good fortune or ill, an immovable courage, an iron will. No English ruler has ever shown greater nobleness of natural temper or a wider capacity for government than the Somersetshire squire whom his enemies, made clear-sighted by their hate, greeted truly enough as "King Pym."

On the eve of the elections he rode with Hampden through the counties to rouse England to a sense of the crisis which had come. But his ride was hardly needed, for the summons of a Parliament at once woke the kingdom to a fresh life. The Puritan emigration to New England was suddenly and utterly suspended; "the change," said Winthrop, "made all men to stay in England in expectation of a new world." The public discontent spoke from every Puritan pulpit, and expressed itself in a sudden burst of pamphlets, the first-fruits of the thirty thousand which were issued in the twenty years that followed, and which turned England at large into a school of political discussion. The resolute looks of the members as they gathered at Westminster on the third of November, 1640, contrasted with the hesitating words of the King; and each brought from borough or county a petition of grievances. Fresh petitions were brought every day by bands of citizens or farmers. The first week was spent in receiving these petitions, and in appointing forty committees to examine and report on them, whose reports formed the grounds on which the Commons subsequently acted. The next work of the Commons was to deal with the agents of the royal system. It was agreed that the King's

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The meeting of the Parliament.

CH. VIII. name should be spared; but in every county a list of
 The Long officers who had carried out the plans of the Government
 Parliament. was ordered to be prepared and laid before the House.
 1640- But the Commons were far from dealing merely with these
 1644. meaner "delinquents." They resolved to strike at the
 men whose counsels had wrought the evil of the past years
 of tyranny; and their first blow was at the leading
 ministers of the King.

*Impeachment
 of Strafford.*

Even Laud was not the centre of so great and uni-
 versal a hatred as the Earl of Strafford. Strafford's
 guilt was more than the guilt of a servile instrument
 of tyranny, it was the guilt of "that grand apostate
 to the Commonwealth who," in the terrible words which
 closed Lord Digby's invective, "must not expect to be
 pardoned in this world till he be despatched to the
 other." He was conscious of his danger, but Charles
 forced him to attend the Court; and with characteristic
 boldness he resolved to anticipate attack by accusing the
 Parliamentary leaders of a treasonable correspondence
 with the Scots. He reached London a week after the
 opening of the Parliament; and hastened the next morn-
 ing to an interview with the King. But he had to deal
 with men as energetic as himself. He was just laying his
 scheme before Charles when the news reached him that
 Pym was at the bar of the Lords with his impeachment
 for high treason. On the morning of the 11th of
 November the doors of the House of Commons had been
 locked, Strafford's impeachment voted, and carried by Pym
 with 300 members at his back to the bar of the Lords.
 The Earl hurried at once to the Parliament. "With
 speed," writes an eye-witness, "he comes to the House:
 he calls rudely at the door," and, "with a proud glooming
 look, makes towards his place at the board-head. But at
 once many bid him void the House, so he is forced in con-
 fusion to go to the door till he was called." He was only
 recalled to hear his committal to the Tower. He was still
 resolute to retort the charge of treason on his foes, and

"offered to speak, but was commanded to be gone without
 a word." The keeper of the Black Rod demanded his
 sword as he took him in charge. "This done, he makes
 through a number of people towards his coach, no man
 capping to him, before whom that morning the greatest of
 all England would have stood uncovered."

The blow was quickly followed up. Windebank, the
 Secretary of State, was charged with a corrupt favouring of
 recusants, and escaped to France; Finch, the Lord Keeper,
 was impeached, and fled in terror oversea. In December
 Laud was himself committed to the charge of the Usher.
 The shadow of what was to come falls across the pages of
 his diary, and softens the hard temper of the man into a
 strange tenderness. "I stayed at Lambeth till the evening,"
 writes the Archbishop, "to avoid the gaze of the people.
 I went to evening prayer in my chapel. The Psalms of
 the day and chapter fifty of Isaiah gave me great comfort.
 God make me worthy of it, and fit to receive it. As I
 went to my barge, hundreds of my poor neighbours stood
 there and prayed for my safety and return to my house.
 For which I bless God and them." In February Sir Robert
 Berkeley, one of the judges who had held that ship-money
 was legal, was seized while sitting on the Bench and com-
 mitted to prison. In the very first days of the Parliament
 a yet more emphatic proof of the downfall of the royal
 system had been given by the recall of Prynne and his
 fellow "martyrs" from their prisons, and by their entry
 in triumph into London, amidst the shouts of a great
 multitude who strewed laurels in their path.

The effect of these rapid blows was seen in the
 altered demeanour of the King. Charles at once dropped
 his old tone of command. He ceased to protest
 against the will of the Commons, and looked sullenly on
 while one by one the lawless acts of his Government
 were undone. Ship-money was declared illegal; and
 the judgement in Hampden's case was annulled. In
 February, 1641, a statute declaring "the ancient right

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*Fall of
 the
 Ministers.*

*Work of
 the
 Houses.*

CH. VIII. of the subjects of this kingdom that no subsidy, custom, impost, or any charge whatsoever ought or may be laid or imposed upon any merchandize exported or imported by subjects, denizens, or aliens, without common consent in Parliament," put an end for ever to all pretensions to a right of arbitrary taxation on the part of the Crown. A Triennial Bill enforced the assembly of the Houses every three years, and bound the returning officers to proceed to election if no royal writ were issued to summon them.

*Church
reform.*

The subject of religion was one of greater difficulty. In ecclesiastical as in political matters the aim of the parliamentary leaders was strictly conservative. Their purpose was to restore the Church of England to its state under Elizabeth, and to free it from the "innovations" introduced by Laud and his fellow-prelates. With this view commissioners were sent in January, 1641, into every county "for the defacing, demolishing, and quite taking away of all images, altars, or tables turned altarwise, crucifixes, superstitious pictures, monuments, and reliques of idolatry out of all churches and chapels." But the bulk of the Commons as of the Lords were averse from any radical changes in the constitution or doctrine of the Church. All however were agreed in the necessity of reform; and one of the first acts of the Parliament was to appoint a Committee of Religion to consider the question. Within as without the House the general opinion was in favour of a reduction of the power and wealth of the prelates, as well as of the jurisdiction of the Church courts. Even among the bishops themselves the more prominent saw the need for consenting to an abolition of Chapters and Bishops' Courts, as well as to the election of a council of ministers in each diocese, which had been suggested by Archbishop Usher as a check on episcopal autocracy. A scheme to this effect was drawn up by Bishop Williams of Lincoln; but it was far from meeting the wishes of the general body of the Commons. The part

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which the higher clergy had taken in lending themselves to do political work for the Crown was fresh in the minds of all; and in addition to the changes which Williams proposed, Pym and Lord Falkland demanded a severance of the clergy from all secular or state offices, and an expulsion of the bishops from the House of Lords. Such a measure seemed needful to restore the independent action of the Peers; for the number and servility of the bishops were commonly strong enough to prevent the Upper House from taking any part which was disagreeable to the Crown.

Further the bulk of the Commons had no will to go. There were others indeed who were pressing hard to go further. A growing party demanded the abolition of Episcopacy altogether. The doctrines of Cartwright had risen into popularity under the persecution of Laud, and Presbyterianism was now a formidable force among the middle classes. Its chief strength lay in the eastern counties and in London, where a few clergymen such as Calamy and Marshall formed a committee for its diffusion; while in Parliament it was represented by Lord Brooke, Lord Mandeville, and Lord Saye and Sele. In the Commons Sir Harry Vane represented a more extreme party of reformers, the Independents of the future, whose sentiments were little less hostile to Presbyterianism than to Episcopacy, but who acted with the Presbyterians for the present, and formed a part of what became known as the "root and branch" party, from its demand for the utter extirpation of prelacy. The attitude of Scotland in the struggle against tyranny, and the political advantages of a religious union between the two kingdoms, gave force to the Presbyterian party; and the agitation which it set on foot found a vigorous support in the Scotch Commissioners who had been sent to treat of peace with the Parliament. Thoughtful men, too, were moved by a desire to knit the English Church more closely to the general body of Protestantism. Milton, who after the composition of his "Lycidas" had spent a year in foreign travel, returned to

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CH. VIII. throw himself on this ground into the theological strife. He held it "an unjust thing that the English should differ from all churches as many as be reformed." In spite of this pressure however, and of a Presbyterian petition from London with fifteen thousand signatures which had been presented at the very opening of the Houses, the Parliament remained hostile to any change in the constitution of the Church. The Committee of Religion reported in favour of the reforms proposed by Falkland and Pym; and on the tenth of March, 1641, a bill for the removal of bishops from the House of Peers passed the Commons almost unanimously.

*Trial of
Strafford.*

As yet all had gone well. The King made no sign of opposition. He was known to be resolute against the abolition of Episcopacy; but he announced no purpose of resisting the removal of the bishops from the House of Peers. Strafford's life he was determined to save; but he threw no obstacle in the way of his impeachment. The trial of the Earl opened on the twenty-second of March. The whole of the House of Commons appeared in Westminster Hall to support it, and the passion which the cause excited was seen in the loud cries of sympathy or hatred which burst from the crowded benches on either side as Strafford for fifteen days struggled with a remarkable courage and ingenuity against the list of charges, and melted his audience to tears by the pathos of his defence. But the trial was suddenly interrupted. Though tyranny and misgovernment had been conclusively proved against the Earl, the technical proof of treason was weak. "The law of England," to use Hallam's words, "is silent as to conspiracies against itself," and treason by the Statute of Edward the Third was restricted to a levying of war against the King or a compassing of his death. The Commons endeavoured to strengthen their case by bringing forward the notes of a meeting of the Council in which Strafford had urged the use of his Irish troops "to reduce that kingdom to obedience;" but the Lords would only admit the evidence

on condition of wholly reopening the case. Pym and Hampden remained convinced of the sufficiency of the impeachment; but the House broke loose from their control. Under the guidance of St. John and Lord Falkland the Commons resolved to abandon these judicial proceedings, and fall back on the resource of a Bill of Attainder. The bill passed the Lower House on the 21st of April by a majority of 204 to 59; and on the 29th it received the assent of the Lords. The course which the Parliament took has been bitterly censured by some whose opinion in such a matter is entitled to respect. But the crime of Strafford was none the less a crime that it did not fall within the scope of the Statute of Treasons. It is impossible indeed to provide for some of the greatest dangers which can happen to national freedom by any formal statute. Even now a minister might avail himself of the temper of a Parliament elected in some moment of popular panic, and, though the nation returned to its senses, might simply by refusing to appeal to the country govern in defiance of its will. Such a course would be technically legal, but such a minister would be none the less a criminal. Strafford's course, whether it fell within the Statute of Treasons or no, was from beginning to end an attack on the freedom of the whole nation. In the last resort a nation retains the right of self-defence, and a Bill of Attainder is the assertion of such a right for the punishment of a public enemy who falls within the scope of no written law.

The counsel of Pym and of Hampden had been prompted by no doubt of the legality of the attainder. But they looked on the impeachment as still likely to succeed, and they were anxious at this moment to conciliate the King. The real security for the permanence of the changes they had wrought lay in a lasting change in the royal counsels; and such a change it seemed possible to bring about. To save Strafford and Episcopacy Charles listened in the spring of 1641 to a proposal for entrusting the offices of state to the leaders of the

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*The
Army
Plot.*

CH. VIII. Parliament. In this scheme the Earl of Bedford was to become Lord Treasurer, Pym Chancellor of the Exchequer, Holles Secretary of State, while Lords Essex, Mandeville, and Saye and Sele occupied various posts in the administration. Foreign affairs would have been entrusted to Lord Holland, whose policy was that of alliance with Richelieu and Holland against Spain, a policy whose adoption would have been sealed by the marriage of a daughter of Charles with the Prince of Orange. With characteristic foresight Hampden sought only the charge of the Prince of Wales. He knew that the best security for freedom in the after-time would be a patriot king. Charles listened to this project with seeming assent; the only conditions he made were that Episcopacy should not be abolished, nor Strafford executed; and though the death of Lord Bedford put an end to it for the moment, the Parliamentary leaders seem still to have had hopes of their entry into the royal Council. But meanwhile Charles was counting the chances of a very different policy. The courtiers about him were rallying from their first panic. His French Queen, furious at what she looked on as insults to royalty, and yet more furious at the persecution of the Catholics, was spurring him to violent courses. And for violence there seemed at the moment an opportunity. In Ireland Strafford's army refused to disband itself. In Scotland the union of the nobles was already broken by the old spirit of faction; and in his jealousy of the power gained by his hereditary enemy, the Earl of Argyle, Lord Montrose had formed a party with other great nobles, and was pressing Charles to come and carry out a counter revolution in the North. Above all the English army, which still lay at York, was discontented by its want of pay and by the favour shown to the Scottish soldiers in its front. The discontent was busily fanned by its officers; and a design was laid before Charles by which advantage might be taken of the humour of the army to march it upon London, to seize the Tower and free Strafford. With the Earl at

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their head, the soldiers could then overawe the Houses and free the King from his thralldom. Charles listened to the project; he refused any expression of assent; but he kept the secret, and suffered the plot to go on, while he continued the negotiations with the Parliamentary leaders.

But he was now in the hands of men who were his match in intrigue as they were more than his match in quickness of action. In the beginning of May, it is said through a squabble among the conspirators, the army plot became known to Pym. The moment was a critical one. Much of the energy and union of the Parliament was already spent. The Lords were beginning to fall back into their old position of allies of the Court. They were holding at bay the bill for the expulsion of the bishops from their seats in Parliament which had been sent up by the Lower House, though the measure aimed at freeing the Peers as a legislative body by removing from among them a body of men whose servility made them mere tools of the Crown, while it averted—if but for the moment—the growing pressure for the abolition of episcopacy. Things were fast coming to a stand-still, when the discovery of the army plot changed the whole situation. Waver as the Peers might, they had no mind to be tricked by the King and overawed by his soldiery. The Commons were stirred to their old energy, London itself was driven to panic at the thought of passing into the hands of a mutinous and unpaid army. The general alarm sealed Strafford's doom. In plotting for his release, the plotters had marked him out as a life which was the main danger to the new state of things. Strafford still hoped in his master; he had a pledge from Charles that his life should be saved; and on the first of May the King in a formal message to the Parliament had refused his assent to the Bill of Attainder. But the Queen had no mind that her husband should suffer for a minister whom she hated, and before her pressure the King gave way. On the tenth of May he gave his assent to the bill by commission, and on the twelfth Strafford

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CH. VIII. passed to his doom. He died as he had lived. His friends warned him of the vast multitude gathered before the Tower to witness his fall. "I know how to look death in the face, and the people too," he answered proudly. "I thank God I am no more afraid of death, but as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to bed." As the axe fell, the silence of the great multitude was broken by a universal shout of joy. The streets blazed with bonfires. The bells clashed out from every steeple. "Many," says an observer, "that came to town to see the execution rode in triumph back, waving their hats, and with all expressions of joy through every town they went, crying, 'His head is off His head is off!'"

*The
Panic.*

The failure of the attempt to establish a Parliamentary ministry, the discovery of the army plot, the execution of Strafford, were the turning points in the history of the Long Parliament. Till May, 1641, there was still hope for an accommodation between the Commons and the Crown by which the freedom that had been won might have been taken as the base of a new system of government. But from that hour little hope of such an agreement remained. The Parliament could put no trust in the King. The air at Westminster, since the discovery of the army conspiracy, was full of rumours and panic; the creak of a few boards revived the memory of the Gunpowder Plot, and the members rushed out of the House of Commons in the full belief that it was undermined. On the other hand, Charles put by all thought of reconciliation. If he had given his assent to Strafford's death, he never forgave the men who had wrested his assent from him. From that hour he regarded his consent to the new measures as having been extorted by force, and to be retracted at the first opportunity. His opponents were quick to feel the King's resolve of a counter-revolution; and both Houses, in their terror, swore to defend the Protestant religion and the public liberties, an oath which was subsequently exacted from every one engaged in civil employment, and

voluntarily taken by the great mass of the people. The same terror of a counter-revolution induced even Hyde and the "moderate men" in the Commons to bring in a bill providing that the present Parliament should not be dissolved but by its own consent; and the same commission which gave the King's assent to Strafford's attainder gave his assent to this bill for perpetuating the Parliament.

Of all the demands of the Parliament this was the first that could be called distinctly revolutionary. To consent to it was to establish a power permanently co-ordinate with the Crown. But Charles signed the bill without protest. He had ceased to look on his acts as those of a free agent; and he was already planning the means of breaking the Parliament. What had hitherto held him down was the revolt of Scotland and the pressure of the Scotch army across the border. But its payment and withdrawal could no longer be delayed. The death of Strafford was immediately followed by the conclusion of a pacification between the two countries; and the sum required for the disbanding of both armies was provided by a poll-tax. Meanwhile the Houses hastened to complete their task of reform. The civil and judicial jurisdiction of the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, the irregular jurisdictions of the Council of the North, the Duchy of Lancaster, the County of Chester, were summarily abolished with a crowd of lesser tribunals. The work was pushed hastily on, for haste was needed. On the sixth of August the two armies were alike disbanded; and the Scots were no sooner on their way homeward than the King resolved to prevent their return. In spite of prayers from the Parliament, he left London for Edinburgh, yielded to every demand of the Assembly and the Scotch Estates, attended the Presbyterian worship, lavished titles and favours on the Earl of Argyle and the patriot leaders, and gained for a while a popularity which spread dismay in the English Parliament. Their dread of his designs was increased when he was found to have been intriguing

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all the while with the Earl of Montrose—whose conspiracy had been discovered before the King's coming and rewarded with imprisonment in the castle of Edinburgh—and when Hamilton and Argyle withdrew suddenly from the capital, and charged Charles with a treacherous plot to seize and carry them out of the realm.

The fright was fanned to frenzy by news which came suddenly from Ireland. The quiet of that unhappy country under Strafford's rule had been a mere quiet of terror. The Catholic Englishry were angered by the Deputy's breach of faith. Before his coming Charles had promised for a sum of £120,000 to dispense with the oath of supremacy, to suffer recusants to practice in the courts of law, and to put a stop to the constant extortion of their lands by legal process. The money was paid; but by the management of Wentworth, the "Graces" which it was to bring received no confirmation from the Irish Parliament. The Lord-Deputy's policy aimed at keeping the recusants still at the mercy of the Crown; what it really succeeded in doing was to rob them of any hope of justice or fair dealing from the government. The native Irishry were yet more bitterly outraged by his dealings in Connaught. Under pretext that as inhabitants of a conquered country Irishmen had no rights but by express grant from the Crown, the Deputy had wrested nearly a half of the lands in that province from their native holders with the view of founding a new English plantation. The new settlers were slow in coming, but the evictions and spoliation renewed the bitter wrath which had been stirred by the older plantation in Ulster. All however remained quiet till the fall of Strafford put an end to the semblance of rule. The disbanded soldiers of the army he had raised spread over the country, and stirred the smouldering disaffection into a flame. In October, 1641, a conspiracy, organized with wonderful power and secrecy, by Sir Phelim O'Neal burst forth in Ulster, where the confiscation of the Settlement had never been forgiven, and spread like wildfire

over the centre and west of the island. Dublin was saved by a mere chance; but in the open country the work of murder went on unchecked. Thousands of English people perished in a few days, and rumour doubled and trebled the number. Tales of horror and outrage, such as maddened our own England when they reached us from Cawnpore, came day after day over the Irish Channel. Sworn depositions told how husbands were cut to pieces in presence of their wives, their children's brains dashed out before their faces, their daughters brutally violated and driven out naked to perish frozen in the woods. "Some," says May, "were burned on set purpose, others drowned for sport or pastime, and if they swam kept from landing with poles, or shot, or murdered in the water; many were buried quick, and some set into the earth breast-high and there left to famish."

Much of all this was the wild exaggeration of panic, but there was enough in the revolt to carry terror to the hearts of Englishmen. It was unlike any earlier rising in its religious character. It was no longer a struggle, as of old, of Celt against Saxon, but of Catholic against Protestant. The Papists within the Pale joined hands in it with the wild kernes outside the Pale. When the governing body of the rebels met at Kells in the following spring they called themselves "Confederate Catholics," resolved to defend "the public and free exercise of the true and Catholic Roman religion." The panic waxed greater when it was found that they claimed to be acting by the King's commission, and in aid of his authority. They professed to stand by Charles and his heirs against all that should "directly and indirectly endeavour to suppress their royal prerogatives." They showed a Commission, purporting to have been issued by royal command at Edinburgh, and styled themselves "the King's army." The Commission was a forgery, but belief in it was quickened by the want of all sympathy with the national honour which Charles displayed. To him the revolt seemed a useful

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CH. VIII. check on his opponents. "I hope," he wrote coolly, when the news reached him, "this ill news of Ireland may hinder some of these follies in England." In any case it would necessitate the raising of an army, and with an army at his command he would again be the master of the Parliament. The Parliament, on the other hand, saw in the Irish revolt, the news of which met them but a few days after their reassembly at the close of October, the disclosure of a vast scheme for a counter-revolution, of which the withdrawal of the Scotch army, the reconciliation of Scotland, the intrigues at Edinburgh were all parts. Its terror was quickened into panic by the exultation of the royalists at the King's return to London at the close of November, and by the appearance of a royalist party in the Parliament itself.

*The new
Royalists.*

The new party had been silently organized by Hyde, the future Lord Clarendon. To Hyde and to the men who gathered round him enough seemed to have been done. They clung to the law, but the law had been vindicated. They bitterly resented the system of Strafford and of Laud; but the system was at an end. They believed that English freedom hung on the assembly of Parliament and on the loyal co-operation of the Crown with this Great Council of the Realm; but the assembly of Parliaments was now secured by the Triennial Bill, and the King professed himself ready to rule according to the counsels of Parliament. On the other hand they desired to preserve to the Crown the right and power it had had under the Tudors. They revolted from any attempt to give the Houses a share in the actual work of administration. On both political and religious grounds they were resolute to suffer no change in the relations of the Church to the State, or to weaken the prerogative of the Crown by the establishment of a Presbyterianism which asserted any sort of spiritual independence. More complex impulses told on the course of Lord Falkland. Falkland was a man learned and accomplished, the centre

of a circle which embraced the most liberal thinkers of his day. He was a keen reasoner and an able speaker. But he was the centre of that Latitudinarian party which was slowly growing up in the reaction from the dogmatism of the time, and his most passionate longing was for liberty of religious thought. Such a liberty the system of the Stuarts had little burdened; what Laud pressed for was uniformity, not of speculation, but of practice and ritual. But the temper of Puritanism was a dogmatic temper, and the tone of the Parliament already threatened a narrowing of the terms of speculative belief for the Church of England. While this fear estranged Falkland from the Parliament, his dread of a conflict with the Crown, his passionate longing for peace, his sympathy for the fallen, led him to struggle for a King whom he distrusted, and to die in a cause that was not his own. Behind Falkland and Hyde soon gathered a strong force of supporters; chivalrous soldiers like Sir Edmund Verney ("I have eaten the King's bread and served him now thirty years, and I will not do so base a thing as to distrust him"), as well as men frightened at the rapid march of change, or by the dangers which threatened Episcopacy and the Church. And with these stood the few but ardent partizans of the Court; and the time-servers who had been swept along by the tide of popular passion, but who had believed its force to be spent, and looked forward to a new triumph of the Crown.

With a broken Parliament, and perils gathering without, Pym resolved to appeal for aid to the nation itself. The Solemn Remonstrance which he laid before the House of Commons in November was in effect an appeal to the country at large. It is this purpose that accounts for its unusual form. The Remonstrance was more an elaborate State-Paper than a petition to the King. It told in a detailed narrative the work which the Parliament had done, the difficulties it had surmounted, and the new dangers which lay in its path. The Parliament

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had been charged with a design to abolish Episcopacy, it declared its purpose to be simply that of reducing the power of bishops. Politically it repudiated the taunt of revolutionary aims. It demanded only the observance of the existing laws against recusancy, securities for the due administration of justice, and the employment of ministers who possessed the confidence of Parliament. The new King's party fought fiercely against its adoption; debate followed debate; the sittings were prolonged till lights had to be brought in; and it was only at midnight, and by a majority of eleven, that the Remonstrance was finally adopted. On an attempt of the minority to offer a formal protest against a subsequent vote for its publication the slumbering passion broke out into a flame. "Some waved their hats over their heads, and others took their swords in their scabbards out of their belts, and held them by the pommels in their hands, setting the lower part on the ground." Only Hampden's coolness and tact averted a conflict. The Remonstrance was felt on both sides to be a crisis in the struggle. "Had it been rejected," said Cromwell as he left the House, "I would have sold to-morrow all I possess, and left England for ever!" It was presented to Charles on the first of December, and the King listened to it sullenly; but it kindled afresh the spirit of the country. London swore to live and die with the Parliament; associations were formed in every county for the defence of the Houses; and when the guard which the Commons had asked for in the panic of the army plot was withdrawn by the King, the populace crowded down to Westminster to take its place.

Cavaliers
and
Round-
heads.

The gathering passion soon passed into actual strife. Pym and his colleagues saw that the disunion in their ranks sprang above all from the question of the Church. On the one side were the Presbyterian zealots who were clamouring for the abolition of Episcopacy. On the other were the conservative tempers who in the dread of such demands were beginning to see in the course of the Parlia-

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ment a threat against the Church which they loved. To put an end to the pressure of the one party and the dread of the other Pym took his stand on the compromise suggested by the Committee of Religion in the spring. The bill for the removal of bishops from the House of Lords had been rejected by the Lords on the eve of the King's journey to Scotland. It was now again introduced. But, in spite of violent remonstrances from the Commons, the bill still hung fire among the Peers; and the delay roused the excited crowd of Londoners who gathered round Whitehall. The bishops' carriages were stopped, and the prelates themselves rabbled on their way to the House. At the close of December the angry pride of Williams induced ten of his fellow bishops to declare themselves prevented from attendance in Parliament, and to protest against all acts done in their absence as null and void. Such a protest was utterly unconstitutional; and even on the part of the Peers who had been maintaining the bishops' rights it was met by the committal of the prelates who had signed it to the Tower. But the contest gave a powerful aid to the projects of the King. The courtiers declared openly that the rabbling of the bishops proved that there was "no free Parliament," and strove to bring about fresh outrages by gathering troops of officers and soldiers of fortune, who were seeking for employment in the Irish war, and pitting them against the crowds at Whitehall. The combatants pelted one another with nicknames which were soon to pass into history. To wear his hair long and flowing almost to the shoulder was at this time the mark of a gentleman, whether Puritan or anti-Puritan. Servants on the other hand or apprentices wore the hair closely cropped to the head. The crowds who flocked to Westminster were chiefly made up of London apprentices; and their opponents taunted them as "Round-heads." They replied by branding the courtiers about Whitehall as soldiers of fortune or "Cavaliers." The gentlemen who gathered round the King in the coming

CH. VIII. struggle were as far from being military adventurers as the gentlemen who fought for the Parliament were London apprentices; but the words soon passed into nicknames for the whole mass of royalists and patriots.

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Seizure of
the Five
Members.

From nicknames the soldiers and apprentices soon passed to actual brawls; and the strife beneath its walls created fresh alarm in the Parliament. But Charles persisted in refusing it a guard. "On the honour of a King" he engaged to defend them from violence as completely as his own children, but the answer had hardly been given when his Attorney appeared at the bar of the Lords, and accused Hampden, Pym, Hollis, Strode, and Haselrig of high treason in their correspondence with the Scots. A herald-at-arms appeared at the bar of the Commons, and demanded the surrender of the five members. All constitutional law was set aside by a charge which proceeded personally from the King, which deprived the accused of their legal right to a trial by their peers, and summoned them before a tribunal that had no pretence to a jurisdiction over them. The Commons simply promised to take the demand into consideration. They again requested a guard. "I will reply to-morrow," said the King. He had in fact resolved to seize the members in the House itself; and on the morrow, the 4th of January, 1642, he summoned the gentlemen who clustered about Whitehall to follow him, and, embracing the Queen, whose violent temper had urged him to this outrage, promised her that in an hour he would return master of his kingdom. A mob of Cavaliers joined him as he left the palace, and remained in Westminster Hall as Charles, accompanied by his nephew, the Elector-Palatine, entered the House of Commons. "Mr. Speaker," he said, "I must for a time borrow your chair!" He paused with a sudden confusion as his eye fell on the vacant spot where Pym commonly sat: for at the news of his approach the House had ordered the five members to withdraw. "Gentlemen," he began in slow broken sentences, "I am sorry

for this occasion of coming unto you. Yesterday I sent a Sergeant-at-arms upon a very important occasion to apprehend some that by my command were accused of high treason, whereunto I did expect obedience and not a message." Treason, he went on, had no privilege, "and therefore I am come to know if any of these persons that were accused are here." There was a dead silence, only broken by his reiterated "I must have them where-soever I find them." He again paused, but the stillness was unbroken. Then he called out, "Is Mr. Pym here?" There was no answer; and Charles, turning to the Speaker, asked him whether the five members were there. Lenthall fell on his knees, and replied that he had neither eyes nor tongue to see or say anything save what the House commanded him. "Well, well," Charles angrily retorted, "'tis no matter. I think my eyes are as good as another's!" There was another long pause while he looked carefully over the ranks of members. "I see," he said at last, "my birds are flown, but I do expect you will send them to me." If they did not, he added, he would seek them himself; and with a closing protest that he never intended any force "he went out of the House," says an eye-witness, "in a more discontented and angry passion than he came in."

Nothing but the absence of the five members and the calm dignity of the Commons had prevented the King's outrage from ending in bloodshed. "It was believed," says Whitelock, who was present at the scene, "that if the King had found them there, and called in his guards to have seized them, the members of the House would have endeavoured the defence of them, which might have proved a very unhappy and sad business." Five hundred gentlemen of the best blood in England would hardly have stood tamely by while the bravoës of Whitehall laid hands on their leaders in the midst of the Parliament. But Charles was blind to the danger of his course. The five members had taken refuge in the city, and it was

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Charles
withdraws
from
London.

CH. VIII. there that on the next day the King himself demanded their surrender from the aldermen at Guildhall. Cries of "Privilege" rang round him as he returned through the streets: the writs issued for the arrest of the five were disregarded by the Sheriffs; and a proclamation issued four days later, declaring them traitors, passed without notice. Terror drove the Cavaliers from Whitehall, and Charles stood absolutely alone; for the outrage had severed him for the moment from his new friends in the Parliament, and from the ministers, Falkland and Colepepper, whom he had chosen among them. But lonely as he was, Charles had resolved on war. The Earl of Newcastle was despatched to muster a royal force in the north; and on the tenth of January news that the five members were about to return in triumph to Westminster drove Charles from Whitehall. He retired to Hampton Court and to Windsor, while the Trained Bands of London and Southwark on foot, and the London watermen on the river, all sworn "to guard the Parliament, the Kingdom, and the King," escorted Pym and his fellow-members along the Thames to the House of Commons. Both sides prepared for a struggle which was now inevitable. The Queen sailed from Dover with the Crown jewels to buy munitions of war. The Cavaliers again gathered round the King, and the royalist press flooded the country with State papers drawn up by Hyde. On the other hand, the Commons resolved by vote to secure the great arsenals of the kingdom, Hull, Portsmouth and the Tower; while mounted processions of freeholders from Buckinghamshire and Kent traversed London on their way to St. Stephen's, vowing to live and die with the Parliament.

*Preparations
for war.*

The Lords were scared out of their policy of obstruction by Pym's bold announcement of the position taken by the House of Commons. "The Commons," said their leader, "will be glad to have your concurrence and help in saving the kingdom: but if they fail of it, it should not discourage them in doing their duty. And whether the kingdom be lost

or saved, they shall be sorry that the story of this present Parliament should tell posterity that in so great a danger and extremity the House of Commons should be enforced to save the kingdom alone." The effect of these words was seen in the passing of the bill for excluding bishops from the House of Lords, the last act of this Parliament to which Charles gave his assent. The great point however was to secure armed support from the nation at large, and here both sides were in a difficulty. Previous to the innovations introduced by the Tudors, and which had been taken away by the bill against pressing soldiers, the King in himself had no power of calling on his subjects generally to bear arms, save for the purposes of restoring order or meeting foreign invasion. On the other hand no one contended that such a power has ever been exercised by the two Houses without the King; and Charles steadily refused to consent to a Militia bill, in which the command of the national force was given in every county to men devoted to the Parliamentary cause. Both parties therefore broke through constitutional precedent, the Parliament in appointing Lord Lieutenants of the Militia by ordinance of the two Houses, Charles in levying forces by royal commissions of array.

But the King's great difficulty lay in procuring arms, and on the twenty-third of April he suddenly appeared before Hull, the magazine of the north, and demanded admission. The new governor, Sir John Hotham, fell on his knees, but refused to open the gates: and the avowal of his act by the Parliament was followed at the end of May by the withdrawal of the royalist party among its members from their seats at Westminster. Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde, with thirty-two peers and sixty members of the House of Commons joined Charles at York; and Lyttelton, the Lord Keeper, followed with the Great Seal. But one of their aims in joining the King was to put a check on his projects of war; and their efforts were backed by the general opposition

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CH. VIII. of the country. A great meeting of the Yorkshire freeholders which Charles convened on Heyworth Moor ended in a petition praying him to be reconciled to the Parliament; and in spite of gifts of plate from the universities and nobles of his party arms and money were still wanting for his new levies. The two Houses, on the other hand, gained in unity and vigour by the withdrawal of the royalists. The militia was rapidly enrolled, Lord Warwick named to the command of the fleet, and a loan opened in the city to which the women brought even their wedding-rings. The tone of the two Houses rose with the threat of force. It was plain at last that nothing but actual compulsion could bring Charles to rule as a constitutional sovereign; and the last proposals of the Parliament demanded the powers of appointing and dismissing the ministers, of naming guardians for the royal children, and of virtually controlling military, civil, and religious affairs. "If I granted your demands," replied Charles, "I should be no more than the mere phantom of a king."

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CHAPTER IX.

THE CIVIL WAR.

1642—1646.

THE breaking off of negotiations was followed on both sides by preparations for immediate war. Hampden, Pym, and Hollis became the guiding spirits of a Committee of Public Safety which was created by Parliament as its administrative organ. On the twelfth of July 1642 the Houses ordered that an army should be raised "for the defence of the King and the Parliament," and appointed the Earl of Essex as its captain-general and the Earl of Bedford as its general of horse. The force soon rose to twenty thousand foot and four thousand horse; and English and Scotch officers were drawn from the Low Countries. The confidence on the Parliamentary side was great. "We all thought one battle would decide," Baxter confessed after the first encounter; for the King was almost destitute of money and arms, and in spite of his strenuous efforts to raise recruits he was embarrassed by the reluctance of his own adherents to begin the struggle. Resolved however to force on a contest, he raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham "on the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day," the twenty-third of August, but the country made no answer to his appeal. Meanwhile Lord Essex, who had quitted London amidst the shouts of a great multitude with orders from the Parliament to follow the King, "and by battle or other way rescue him from his perfidious councillors and restore him to Parliament," was mustering his army at Northampton.

Edgehill.

CHAP. IX. Charles had but a handful of men, and the dash of a few regiments of horse would have ended the war; but Essex shrank from a decisive stroke, and trusted to reduce the King peacefully to submission by a show of force. But while Essex lingered Charles fell back at the close of September on Shrewsbury, and the whole face of affairs suddenly changed. Catholics and Royalists rallied fast to his standard, and the royal force became strong enough to take the field. With his usual boldness Charles resolved to march at once on the capital and force the Parliament to submit by dint of arms. But the news of his march roused Essex from his inactivity. He had advanced to Worcester to watch the King's proceedings; and he now hastened to protect London. On the twenty-third of October, 1642, the two armies fell in with one another on the field of Edgehill, near Banbury. The encounter was a surprise, and the battle which followed was little more than a confused combat of horse. At its outset the desertion of Sir Faithful Fortescue with a whole regiment threw the Parliamentary forces into disorder, while the Royalist horse on either wing drove their opponents from the field; but the reserve of Lord Essex broke the foot, which formed the centre of the King's line, and though his nephew, Prince Rupert, brought back his squadrons in time to save Charles from capture or flight, the night fell on a drawn battle.

*Charles at
Oxford.*

The moral advantage however rested with the King. Essex had learned that his troopers were no match for the Cavaliers, and his withdrawal to Warwick left open the road to the capital. Rupert pressed for an instant march on London, where the approach of the King's forces had roused utter panic. But the proposal found stubborn opponents among the moderate royalists, who dreaded the complete triumph of Charles as much as his defeat; and their pressure forced the King to pause for a time at Oxford, where he was received with uproarious welcome. When the cowardice of its garrison delivered Reading to

Rupert's horse, and his daring capture of Brentford in November drew the royal army in his support almost to the walls of the capital, the panic of the Londoners was already over, and the junction of their trainbands with the army of Essex forced Charles to fall back again on his old quarters. But though the Parliament rallied quickly from the blow of Edgehill, the war, as its area widened through the winter, went steadily for the King. The fortification of Oxford gave him a firm hold on the midland counties; while the balance of the two parties in the north was overthrown by the march of the Earl of Newcastle, with a force he had raised in Northumberland, upon York. Lord Fairfax, the Parliamentary leader in that county, was thrown back by Newcastle's attack on the manufacturing towns of the West Riding, where Puritanism found its stronghold; and the arrival of the Queen in February, 1643, with arms from Holland encouraged the royal army to push its scouts across the Trent, and threaten the eastern counties, which held firmly for the Parliament. The stress of the war was shown by the vigorous efforts of the Houses. Some negotiations which had gone on into the spring were broken off by the old demand that the King should return to his Parliament; London was fortified; and a tax of too millions a year was laid on the districts which adhered to the Parliamentary cause.

In the spring of 1643 Lord Essex, whose army had been freshly equipped, was ordered to advance upon Oxford. But though the King held himself ready to fall back on the West, the Earl shrank from again risking his raw army in an encounter. He confined himself to the recapture of Reading, and to a month of idle encampment round Brill. But while disease thinned his ranks and the royalists beat up his quarters the war went more and more for the King. The inaction of Essex enabled Charles to send a part of his small force at Oxford to strengthen a royalist rising in the west. Nowhere was the royal cause to take so brave or noble a form

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as among the Cornishmen. Cornwall stood apart from the general life of England: cut off from it not only by differences of blood and speech, but by the feudal tendencies of its people, who clung with a Celtic loyalty to their local chieftains, and suffered their fidelity to the Crown to determine their own. They had as yet done little more than keep the war out of their own county; but the march of a small Parliamentary force under Lord Stamford upon Launceston forced them into action. In May, 1643, a little band of Cornishmen gathered round the chivalrous Sir Bevil Greenvil, "so destitute of provisions that the best officers had but a biscuit a day," and with only a handful of powder for the whole force; but, starving and outnumbered as they were, they scaled the steep rise of Stratton Hill, sword in hand, and drove Stamford back on Exeter with a loss of two thousand men, his ordnance and baggage-train. Sir Ralph Hopton, the best of the royalist generals, took the command of their army as it advanced into Somerset, and drew the stress of the war into the West. Essex despatched a picked force under Sir William Waller to check their advance; but Somerset was already lost ere he reached Bath, and the Cornishmen stormed his strong position on Lansdowne Hill in the teeth of his guns. The stubborn fight robbed the victors of their leaders; Hopton was wounded, Greenvil slain, and with them fell the two heroes of the little army, Sir Nicholas Slanning and Sir John Trevanion, "both young, neither of them above eight and twenty, of entire friendship to one another, and to Sir Bevil Greenvil." Waller too, beaten as he was, hung on their weakened force as it moved for aid upon Oxford, and succeeded in cooping up the foot in Devizes. But in July the horse broke through his lines; and joining a force which Charles had sent to their relief, turned back, and dashed Waller's army to pieces in a fresh victory on Roundway Down.

Hampden
and the
War.

The Cornish rising seemed to decide the fortune of the war; and the succours which his Queen was bringing him

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from the army of the North determined Charles to make a fresh advance upon London. He was preparing for this advance, when Rupert sallied from Oxford to beat up the quarters of the army under Essex, which still remained encamped about Thame. Foremost among this Parliamentary force were the "Greencoats" of John Hampden. From the first outbreak of warfare Hampden had shown the same energy in the field that he had shown in the Parliament. He had contributed two thousand pounds to the loan raised by the Houses for the equipment of an army. He had raised a regiment from among his own tenantry, with the parson of Great Hampden for their chaplain. The men wore his livery of green, as those of Hollis or Brooke or Mandeville wore their leaders' liveries of red, and purple, and blue; the only sign of their common soldiery being the orange scarf, the colour of Lord Essex, which all wore over their uniform. From the first the "Greencoats" had been foremost in the fray. While Essex lay idly watching the gathering of an army round the King, Hampden was already engaged with the royal outposts. It was the coming up of his men that turned the day at Edgehill; and that again saved Lord Brooke from destruction in the repulse of the royal forces at Brentford. It was Hampden's activity that saved Reading from a second capture. During the gloomy winter, when the fortunes of the Houses seemed at their worst, his energy redoubled. His presence was as necessary in the Parliament as in the field; and he was continually on the road between London and Westminster. It was during these busy months that he brought into practical shape a league which was destined to be the mainstay of the Parliamentary force. Nowhere was the Puritan feeling so strong as in the counties about London, in his own Buckinghamshire, in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and the more easterly counties of Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Northampton. Hampden's influence as well as that of his cousin, Oliver Cromwell, who was already active in the war,

CHAP. IX. was bent to bind these shires together in an association for the aid of the Parliament, with a common force, a common fund for its support, and Lord Manchester for its head. The association was at last brought about; and Hampden turned his energies to reinforcing the army of Essex.

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Rupert's raid.

The army was strengthened; but no efforts could spur its leader into activity. Essex had learned his trade in the Thirty Years War; and like most professional soldiers he undervalued the worth of untrained levies. As a great noble, too, he shrank from active hostilities against the King. He believed that in the long run the want of money and of men would force Charles to lay down his arms, and to come to a peaceful understanding with the Parliament. To such a fair adjustment of the claims of both a victory of the Parliament would, he thought, be as fatal as a victory of the King. Against this policy of inaction Hampden struggled in vain. It was to no purpose that he urged Essex to follow Charles after Edgehill, or to attack him after his repulse before Brentford. It was equally to no purpose that he urged at the opening of 1643 an attack upon Oxford. Essex drew nearer to the town indeed; but at the news of the Queen's junction with her husband, and of the successes of the Cornishmen, he fell back to his old cantonment about Thame. Hampden's knowledge of the country warned him of danger from the loose disposition of the army, and he urged Essex to call in the distant outposts and strengthen his line; but his warnings were unheeded. So carelessly were the troops scattered about that Rupert resolved to beat up their quarters; and leaving Oxford in the afternoon of Saturday, the 17th of June, he seized the bridge over the Thame at Chiselhampton, and leaving a force of foot to secure his retreat, threw himself boldly with his horsemen into the midst of the Parliamentary army. Essex with the bulk of his men lay quietly sleeping a few miles to the northward at Thame as Rupert struck in the darkness through the leafy lanes that led to the Chilterns, and

swooped on the villages that lay beneath their slopes. At three in the morning he fell on the troops quartered at Postcombe, then on those at Chinnor. Here some fifty were slain, and more taken prisoners, as they sprang half-naked from their beds. The village was fired, and Rupert again called his men together to pursue their foray. But the early summer sun had now risen; it was too late to attack Wycombe as he had purposed; and the horsemen fell back again through Tetsworth to secure their retreat across the Thames.

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It was time to think of retreat, for Hampden was already in pursuit. He had slept at Watlington; but the tidings of the foray in the village hard by roused him from slumber, and he at once despatched a trooper to Essex to bid the Earl send foot and horse and cut off the Prince from Chiselhampton bridge. Essex objected and delayed till Hampden's patience broke down. The thought of his own village blazing in that Sunday dawn, his own friends and tenants stretched dead in the village streets, carried him beyond all thought of prudence. A troop of horse volunteered to follow him; and few as they were, he pushed at once with them for the bridge. The morning was now far gone; and Rupert had reached Chalgrove Field, a broad space without enclosures, where he had left his foot drawn up amidst the standing corn to secure his retreat. To Hampden the spot was a memorable one; it was there, if we trust a royalist legend, that "he first mustered and drew up men in arms to rebel against the King." But he had little time for memories such as these. His resolve was to hold Rupert by charge after charge till Essex could come up; and the arrival of these troops of horse with some dragoons enabled him to attack. The attack was roughly beaten off, and the assailants thrown into confusion, but Hampden rallied the broken troops and again led them on. Again they were routed, and Rupert drew off across the river without further contest. It was indeed only the courage of Hampden that had fired his little

Death of Hampden.

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who had smitten them would send out anew His light and His truth, that they might lead them and bring them to His holy hill. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, which is the help of my countenance and my God!"

To royalists as to parliamentarians the death of Hampden seemed an omen of ruin to the cause he loved. Disaster followed disaster: Essex, more and more anxious for a peace, fell back on Uxbridge; while a cowardly surrender of Bristol to Prince Rupert gave Charles the second city of the kingdom, and the mastery of the West. The news of the loss of Bristol fell on the Parliament "like a sentence of death." The Lords debated nothing but proposals of peace. London itself was divided. "A great multitude of the wives of substantial citizens" clamoured at the door of the Commons for peace; and a flight of six of the few peers who remained at Westminster to the camp at Oxford proved the general despair of the Parliament's success. From this moment however the firmness of the Parliamentary leaders began slowly to reverse the fortunes of the war. If Hampden was gone, Pym remained; and while weaker men despaired Pym was toiling night and day to organize a future victory. The spirit of the Commons was worthy of their great leader: and Waller was received on his return from Roundway Hill "as if he had brought the King prisoner with him." The Committee of Public Safety were lavish of men and money. Essex was again reinforced. The new army of the associated counties, which had been placed under the command of Lord Manchester, was ordered to check the progress of Newcastle in the North. But it was in the West that the danger was greatest. Prince Maurice continued his brother Rupert's career of success, and his conquest of Barnstaple and Exeter secured Devon for the King. Gloucester alone interrupted the communications between the royal forces in Bristol and those in the North; and at the opening

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Relief of
Gloucester.

CHAP. IX. of August Charles moved against the city with hope of a speedy surrender. But the gallant resistance of the town called Essex to its relief. It was reduced to a single barrel of powder when the Earl's approach forced Charles to raise the siege on the sixth of September; and the Puritan army fell steadily back again on London after an indecisive engagement near Newbury, in which Lord Falkland fell, "ingeminating 'Peace, peace!'" and the London train-bands flung Rupert's horsemen roughly off their front of pikes.

*League
with
Scotland.*

The relief of Gloucester proved to be the turning point of the war. It was not merely that Charles had met with a repulse; it was that he had missed a victory, and that in the actual posture of affairs nothing but a great victory could have saved the King. For the day which witnessed the triumphant return of Essex witnessed the solemn taking of the Covenant. Pym had resolved at last to fling the Scotch sword into the wavering balance; and in the darkest hour of the Parliament's cause Sir Harry Vane had been despatched to Edinburgh to arrange the terms on which the aid of Scotland would be given. First amongst these terms stood the demand of a "unity in Religion;" an adoption, in other words, of the Presbyterian system by the Church of England. To such a change Pym had been steadily opposed. He had even withstood Hampden when, after the passing of the bill for the expulsion of bishops from the House of Peers, Hampden had pressed for the abolition of episcopacy. But events had moved so rapidly since the earlier debates on Church government that some arrangement of this kind had become a necessity. The bishops to a man, and the bulk of the clergy whose bent was purely episcopal, had joined the royal cause, and were being expelled from their livings as "delinquents." Some new system of Church government was imperatively called for by the religious necessities of the country; and though Pym and the leading statesmen were still in opinion moderate

Episcopalians, the growing force of Presbyterianism, and still more the absolute need of Scottish aid and the needs of the war, forced them to seek such a system in the adoption of the Scotch discipline.

Scotland, for its part, saw that the triumph of the Parliament was necessary for its own security. Whatever difficulties stood in the way of Vane's wary and rapid negotiations were removed in fact by the policy of the King. While the Parliament looked for aid to the North, Charles had been seeking assistance from the Irish rebels. Though the massacre had left them the objects of a vengeful hate such as England had hardly known before, with the King they were simply counters in his game of kingcraft. Their rising had now grown into an organized rebellion. In October, 1642, an Assembly of the Confederate Catholics gathered at Kilkenny. Eleven Catholic bishops, fourteen peers, and two hundred and twenty-six commoners, of English and Irish blood alike, formed this body, which assumed every prerogative of sovereignty, communicated with foreign powers, and raised an army to vindicate Irish independence. In spite of this Charles had throughout the year been intriguing with the Confederates through Lord Glamorgan; and though his efforts to secure their direct aid were for some time fruitless he succeeded in September in bringing about an armistice between their forces and the army under the Earl of Ormond which had as yet held them in check. The truce left this army at the King's disposal for service in England; while it secured him as the price of this armistice a pledge from the Catholics that they would support his cause. With their aid Charles thought himself strong enough to strike a blow at the Government in Edinburgh; and the Irish Catholics promised to support by their landing in Argyleshire a rising of the Highlanders under Montrose. None of the King's schemes proved so fatal to his cause as these. On their discovery officer after officer in his own army flung down their commissions, the peers who

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had fled to Oxford fled back again to London, and the royalist reaction in the Parliament itself came utterly to an end. Scotland, anxious for its own safety, hastened to sign the Covenant; and on the twenty-fifth of September, 1643, the Commons, "with uplifted hands," swore in St. Margaret's church to observe it. They pledged themselves to "bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, direction for worship, and catechizing; that we, and our posterity after us, may as brethren live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to live in the midst of us;" to extirpate Popery, prelacy, superstition, schism, and profaneness; to "preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliament, and the liberties of the Kingdom;" to punish malignants and opponents of reformation in Church and State; to "unite the two Kingdoms in a firm peace and union to all posterity." The Covenant ended with a solemn acknowledgment of national sin, and a vow of reformation. "Our true, unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for ourselves and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, is to amend our lives, and each to go before another in the example of a real reformation."

*Pym's
plan for
1644.*

The conclusion of the Covenant had been the last work of Pym. He died on December 6, 1643, and a "Committee of the Two Kingdoms" which was entrusted after his death with the conduct of the war and of foreign affairs did their best to carry out the plans he had formed for the coming year. The vast scope of these plans bears witness to his amazing ability. Three strong armies, comprising a force of fifty thousand men, appeared in the field in the spring of 1644, ready to co-operate with the Scots in the coming campaign. The presence of the Scottish army indeed changed the whole face of the war. With Lord Leven at its head, it crossed the border in January "in a great frost and snow;" and Newcastle, who was hoping

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to be reinforced by detachments from Ormond's army, was forced to hurry northward single-handed to arrest its march. He succeeded in checking Leven at Sunderland, but his departure freed the hands of Fairfax, who in spite of defeat still clung to the West-Riding. With the activity of a true soldier Fairfax threw himself on the forces from Ormond's army who had landed at Chester, and after cutting them to pieces at Nantwich on the twenty-fifth of January, marched as rapidly back upon York. Here he was joined by the army of the Associated Counties, a force of fourteen thousand men under the command of Lord Manchester, but in which Cromwell's name was becoming famous as a leader. The two armies at once drove the force left behind by Newcastle to take shelter within the walls of York, and formed the siege of that city. The danger of York called Newcastle back to its relief; but he was too weak to effect it, and the only issue of his return was the junction of the Scots with its besiegers. The plans of Pym were now rapidly developed. While Manchester and Fairfax united with Lord Leven under the walls of York, Waller, who with the army of the West had held Prince Maurice in check in Dorsetshire, marched quickly to a junction with Essex, whose army had been watching Charles; and the two forces formed a blockade of Oxford.

Charles was thrown suddenly on the defensive. The Irish troops, on which he counted as a balance to the Scots, had been cut to pieces by Fairfax or by Waller, and both in the North and in the South he seemed utterly overmatched. But he was far from despairing. Before the advance of Essex he had answered Newcastle's cry for aid by despatching Prince Rupert from Oxford to gather forces on the Welsh border; and the brilliant partizan, after breaking the sieges of Newark and Latham House, burst over the Lancashire Hills into Yorkshire, slipped by the Parliamentary army, and made his way untouched into York. But the success of this feat of arms

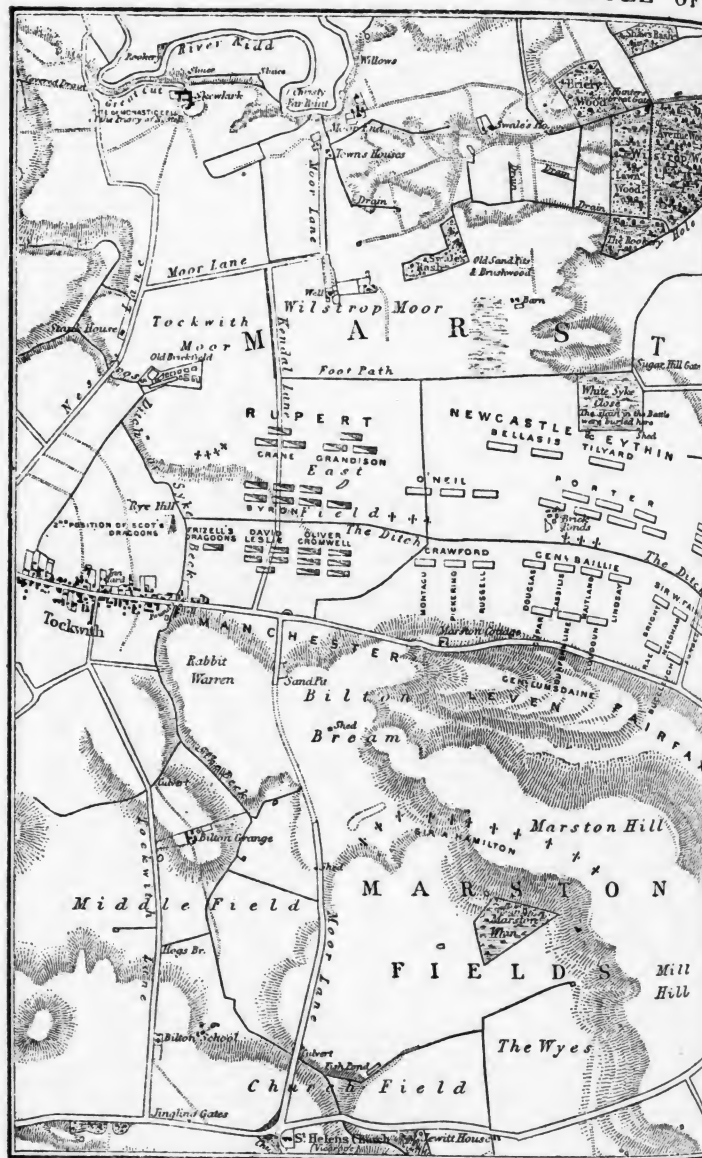
*Marston
Moor.*

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tempted him to a fresh act of daring. He resolved on a decisive battle; and on the second of July, 1644, a discharge of musketry from the two armies as they faced each other on Marston Moor brought on, as evening gathered, a disorderly engagement. On the one flank a charge of the King's horse broke that of the Scotch; on the other, Cromwell's brigade of "Ironsides" won as complete a success over Rupert's troopers. "God made them as stubble to our swords," wrote the general at the close of the day; but in the heat of victory he called back his men from the chase to back Manchester in his attack on the royalist foot, and to rout their other wing of horse as it returned breathless from pursuing the Scots. Nowhere had the fighting been so fierce. A young Puritan who lay dying on the field told Cromwell as he bent over him that one thing lay on his spirit. "I asked him what it was," Cromwell wrote afterwards. "He told me it was that God had not suffered him to be any more the executioner of His enemies."

Newbury. At night-fall all was over; and the royalist cause in the North had perished at a blow. Newcastle fled over sea: York surrendered, and Rupert, with hardly a man at his back, rode southward to Oxford. The blow was the more terrible that it fell on Charles at a moment when his danger in the South was being changed into triumph by a series of brilliant and unexpected successes. After a month's siege the King had escaped from Oxford; had waited till Essex, vexed at having missed his prey, had marched to attack what he looked on as the main royalist force, that under Maurice in the West; and then, turning fiercely on Waller at Cropredy Bridge, had driven him back broken to London, two days before the battle of Marston Moor. Charles followed up his success by hurrying in the track of Essex, whom he hoped to crush between his own force and that under Maurice; and when, by a fatal error, Essex plunged into Cornwall, where the country was hostile, the King hemmed him in among the

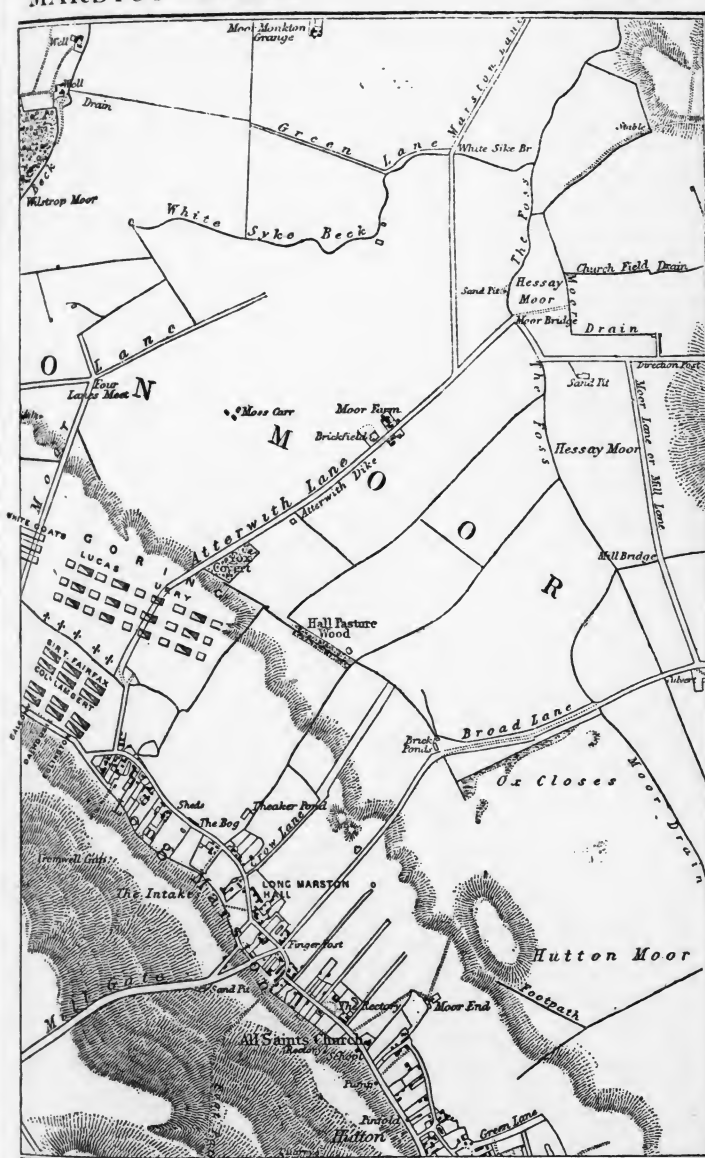
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MARSTON MOOR

To face p. 230.



Stanford's Geog. Enab. 55 Charing Cross

hills, and drew his lines tightly round his army. On the second of September the whole body of the foot were forced to surrender at his mercy, while the horse cut their way through the besiegers, and Essex himself fled by sea to London. Nor was this the only reverse of fortune which brought hope to the royal cause. The day on which the army of Essex surrendered to the King was marked by a royalist triumph in Scotland which promised to undo what Marston Moor had done. The Irish Catholics fulfilled their covenant with Charles by the landing of Irish soldiers in Argyle; and as had long since been arranged, Montrose, throwing himself into the Highlands, called the clans to arms. Flinging his new force on that of the Covenanters at Tippermuir, he gained a victory which enabled him to occupy Perth, to sack Aberdeen, and to spread terror to Edinburgh. The news at once told. The Scottish army in England refused to march further from its own country; and used the siege of Newcastle as a pretext to remain near the border. With the army of Essex annihilated and the Scots at a safe distance no obstacle seemed to lie between the King and London; and as he came up from the West Charles again marched on the capital. But if the Scots were detained at Newcastle the rest of the victors at Marston Moor lay in his path at Newbury; and their force was strengthened by the soldiers who had surrendered in Cornwall, but whom the energy of the Parliament had again brought into the field. On the twenty-seventh of October Charles fell on this army under Lord Manchester's command; but the charges of the royalists failed to break the Parliamentary squadrons, and the soldiers of Essex wiped away the shame of their defeat by flinging themselves on the cannon they had lost, and bringing them back in triumph to their lines. Cromwell seized the moment of victory, and begged hard to be suffered to charge with his single brigade. But Manchester shrank like Essex from a crowning victory over the King. Charles was allowed

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CHAP. IX. to withdraw his army to Oxford, and even to reappear unchecked in the field of his defeat.

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Cromwell.

The quarrel of Cromwell with Lord Manchester at Newbury was destined to give a new colour to the war. Pym, in fact, had hardly been borne to his grave in Westminster Abbey before England instinctively recognized a successor of yet greater genius in the victor of Marston Moor. Born in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign, the child of a cadet of the great house of the Cromwells of Hinchinbrook, and of kin through their mothers with Hampden and St. John, Oliver had been recalled by his father's death from a short stay at Cambridge to the little family estate at Huntingdon, which he quitted for a farm at St. Ives. We have seen his mood during the years of personal rule, as he dwelt in "prolonging" and "blackness" amidst fancies of coming death, the melancholy which formed the ground of his nature feeding itself on the inaction of the time. But his energy made itself felt the moment the tyranny was over. His father had sat, with three of his uncles, in the later Parliaments of Elizabeth. Oliver had himself been returned to that of 1628, and the town of Cambridge sent him as its representative to the Short Parliament as to the Long. It is in the latter that a courtier, Sir Philip Warwick, gives us our first glimpse of his actual appearance. "I came into the House one morning, well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily appparelled, for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor. His linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar. His hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance swoln and reddish; his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour."

The Ironsides.

He was already "much hearkened unto," but his power was to assert itself in deeds rather than in words. He

appeared at the head of a troop of his own raising at Edgehill; but with the eye of a born soldier he at once saw the blot in the army of Essex. "A set of poor tapsters and town apprentices," he warned Hampden, "would never fight against men of honour;" and he pointed to religious enthusiasm as the one weapon which could meet and turn the chivalry of the Cavalier. Even to Hampden the plan seemed impracticable; but the regiment of a thousand men which Cromwell raised for the Association of the Eastern Counties, and which soon became known as his Ironsides, was formed strictly of "men of religion." He spent his fortune freely on the task he set himself. "The business . . . hath had of me in money between eleven and twelve hundred pounds, therefore my private estate can do little to help the public. . . . I have little money of my own (left) to help my soldiers." But they were "a lovely company," he tells his friends with soldierly pride. No blasphemy, drinking, disorder, or impiety were suffered in their ranks. "Not a man swears but he pays his twelve pence." Nor was his choice of "men and religion" the only innovation Cromwell introduced into his new regiment. The social traditions which restricted command to men of birth were disregarded. "It may be," he wrote, in answer to complaints from the committee of the Association, "it provokes your spirit to see such plain men made captains of horse. It had been well that men of honour and birth had entered into their employments; but why do they not appear? But seeing it is necessary the work must go on, better plain men than none: but best to have men patient of wants, faithful and conscientious in their employment, and such, I hope, these will approve themselves." The words paint Cromwell's temper accurately enough; he is far more of the practical soldier than of the reformer; though his genius already breaks in upon his aristocratic and conservative sympathies, and catches glimpses of the social revolution to which the war was drifting. "I had

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CHAP. IX. rather," he once burst out impatiently, "have a plain russet-coated captain, that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than what you call a gentleman, and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed!" he ends, with a return to his more common mood of feeling, but the outburst was none the less a characteristic one.

*The
Independents.*

The same practical temper broke out in a more startling innovation. Against dissidents from the legal worship of the Church the Presbyterians were as bitter as Laud himself. But Nonconformity was rising into proportions which made its claim of toleration, of the freedom of religious worship, one of the problems of the time. Its rise had been a sudden one. The sects who rejected in Elizabeth's day the conception of a National Church, and insisted on the right of each congregation to freedom of worship, had all but disappeared at the close of the Queen's reign. Some of the dissidents, as in the notable instance of the congregation that produced the Pilgrim Fathers, had found a refuge in Holland; but the bulk had been driven by persecution to a fresh conformity with the Established Church. As soon however as Abbott's primacy promised a milder rule, the Separatist refugees began to venture timidly back again to England. During their exile in Holland the main body had contented themselves with the free developement of their system of independent congregations, each forming in itself a complete Church, and to these the name of Independents attached itself at a later time. A small part however had drifted into a more marked severance in doctrine from the Established Church, especially in their belief of the necessity of adult baptism, a belief from which their obscure congregation at Leyden became known as that of the Baptists. Both of these sects gathered a Church in London in the middle of James's reign, but the persecuting zeal of Laud prevented any spread of their opinions under that of his successor; and it was not till their numbers were

suddenly increased by the return of a host of emigrants from New England, with Hugh Peters at their head, on the opening of the Long Parliament, that the Congregational or Independent body began to attract attention.

Lilburne and Burton declared themselves adherents of what was called "the New England way;" and a year later saw in London alone the rise of "fourscore congregations of several sectaries," as Bishop Hall scornfully tells us, "instructed by guides fit for them, cobblers, tailors, felt-makers, and such-like trash." But little religious weight however could be attributed as yet to the Congregational movement. Baxter at this time had not heard of the existence of any Independents. Milton in his earlier pamphlets shows no sign of their influence. Of the hundred and five ministers present in the Westminster Assembly only five were Congregational in sympathy, and these were all returned refugees from Holland. Among the one hundred and twenty London ministers in 1643, but three were suspected of leaning towards the Sectaries. The struggle with Charles in fact at its outset only threw new difficulties in the way of religious freedom. The great majority of the Parliament were averse from any alterations in the constitution or doctrine of the Church itself; and it was only the refusal of the bishops to accept any diminution of their power and revenues, the growth of a party hostile to Episcopalian government, the necessity for purchasing the aid of the Scots by a union in religion as in politics, and above all the urgent need of constructing some new ecclesiastical organization in the place of the older organization which had become impossible from the political attitude of the bishops, that forced on the two Houses the adoption of the Covenant. But the change to a Presbyterian system of Church government seemed at that time of little import to the bulk of Englishmen. The dogma of the necessity of bishops was held by few; and the change was generally regarded with approval as one which brought the Church of England nearer to that of

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Scotland, and to the reformed Churches of the Continent. But whatever might be the change in its administration, no one imagined that it had ceased to be the Church of England, or that it had parted with its right to exact conformity to its worship from the nation at large. The Tudor theory of its relation to the State, of its right to embrace all Englishmen within its pale, and to dictate what should be their faith and form of worship, remained utterly unquestioned by any man of note. The sentiments on which such a theory rested indeed for its main support, the power of historical tradition, the association of "dissidence" with danger to the State, the strong English instinct of order, the as strong English dislike of "innovations," with the abhorrence of "indifferency" as a sign of lukewarmness in matters of religion, had only been intensified by the earlier incidents of the struggle with the King.

*Growth of
dissidence.*

The Parliament therefore was steadily pressing on the new system of ecclesiastical government in the midst of the troubles of the war. An Assembly of Divines, which was called together in 1643 at Westminster, and which sat in the Jerusalem Chamber during the five years which followed, was directed to revise the Articles, to draw up a Confession of Faith, and a Directory of Public Worship; and these with a scheme of Church government, a scheme only distinguished from that of Scotland by the significant addition of a lay court of superior appeal set by Parliament over the whole system of Church courts and assemblies, were accepted by the Houses and embodied in a series of Ordinances. But while the Divines were drawing up their platform of uniform belief and worship, dissidence was growing fast into a religious power. In the terrible agony of the struggle against Charles individual conviction became a stronger force than religious tradition. Theological speculation took an unprecedented boldness from the temper of the times. The shock of war had broken the bonds of custom, and given a violent impulse to the freest thought. "Behold now this vast city!" cried Milton from

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London, "a city of refuge, the mansionhouse of liberty, encompassed with God's protection! The shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers working to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present us, as with their homage and fealty, the approaching reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, according to the force of reason and convincement." The poet himself had drifted from his Presbyterian standpoint and saw that "new Presbyter is but old Priest writ large." The same change was going on widely about him. Four years after the war had begun a horror-stricken pamphleteer numbered sixteen religious sects as existing in defiance of the law; and, widely as these bodies differed among themselves, all were at one in repudiating any right of control in faith or in worship on the part of the Church or its clergy. Above all, the class which became specially infected with the spirit of religious freedom was the class to whose zeal and vigour the Parliament was forced to look for success in the struggle. Cromwell had wisely sought for good fighting men among the "godly" farmers of the Associated Counties. But where he found such men he found dissidents, men who were resolved to seek God after their own fashion, and who were as hostile to the despotism of the national Church as to the despotism of the King.

The problem was a new and a difficult one; but Cromwell met it in the same practical temper which showed itself in his dealings with the social difficulties that stood in the way of military organization. The sentiments of these farmers were not his own. Bitter as had been his hatred of the bishops, and strenuously as he had worked to bring about a change in Church government, Cromwell, like most of the Parliamentary leaders, seems to have been content with the new Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterians were more than content with him. Lord Manchester "suffered

*Cromwell
and the
dissidents.*

CHAP. IX. him to guide the army at his pleasure." "The man, Cromwell," writes the Scotchman Baillie, "is a very wise and active head, universally well beloved as religious and stout." But they were startled and alarmed by his dealings with these dissident recruits. He met the problem in his unspeculative fashion. He wanted good soldiers and good men; and, if they were these, the Independent, the Baptist, the Leveller found entry among his Ironsides. "You would respect them, did you see them," he answered the panic-stricken Presbyterians who charged them with "Anabaptistry" and revolutionary aims: "they are no Anabaptists: they are honest, sober Christians; they expect to be used as men." But he was busier with his new regiment than with theories of Church and State; and the Ironsides were no sooner in action that they proved themselves such soldiers as the war had never seen yet. "Truly they were never beaten at all," their leader said proudly at its close. At Winceby fight they charged "singing psalms," cleared Lincolnshire of the Cavendishes, and freed the eastern counties from all danger from Newcastle's partizans. At Marston Moor they faced and routed Rupert's chivalry. At Newbury it was only Manchester's reluctance that hindered them from completing the ruin of Charles.

Self-renouncing Ordinance. Cromwell had shown his capacity for organization in the creation of the Ironsides; his military genius had displayed itself at Marston Moor. Newbury raised him into a political leader. "Without a more speedy, vigorous, and effective prosecution of the war," he said to the Commons after his quarrel with Manchester, "casting off all lingering proceedings, like those of soldiers of fortune beyond sea to spin out a war, we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of a Parliament." But under the leaders who at present conducted it a vigorous conduct of the war was hopeless. They were, in Cromwell's plain words, "afraid to conquer." They desired not to crush Charles, but to force him back, with as much of his old

strength remaining as might be, to the position of a constitutional King. The old loyalty, too, clogged their enterprise; they shrank from the taint of treason. "If the King be beaten" Manchester urged at Newbury, "he will still be king; if he beat us he will hang us all for traitors." To a mood like this Cromwell's reply seemed horrible; "If I met the King in battle I would fire my pistol at the King as at another." The army, too, as he long ago urged at Edgehill, was not an army to conquer with. Now, as then, he urged that till the whole force was new modelled, and placed under a stricter discipline, "they must not expect any notable success in anything they went about." But the first step in such a re-organization must be a change of officers. The army was led and officered by members of the two Houses, and the Self-renouncing Ordinance, which was introduced by Cromwell and Vane, declared the tenure of military or civil offices incompatible with a seat in either.

The New Model. The long and bitter resistance which this measure met in either House was justified at a later time by the political results that followed the rupture of the tie which had hitherto bound the army to the Parliament. But the drift of public opinion was too strong to be withstood. The country was weary of the mismanagement of the war, and demanded that military necessities should be no longer set aside on political grounds. The Ordinance passed the Houses on the third of April, 1645, and its passage brought about the retirement of Essex, Manchester, and Waller. The new organization of the army went rapidly on through the spring under a new commander-in-chief, Sir Thomas Fairfax, the hero of the long contest in Yorkshire, and who had been raised into fame by his victory at Nantwich, and his bravery at Marston Moor. But behind Fairfax stood Cromwell; and the principles on which Cromwell had formed his Ironsides were carried out on a larger scale in the "New Model." The one aim was to get together twenty thousand "honest" men. "Be careful," Cromwell

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The Civil War.
1642-1646.

CHAP. IX.
The Civil War.
1642-1646.

CHAP. IX. wrote, "what captains of horse you choose, what men be mounted. A few honest men are better than numbers. If you choose godly honest men to be captains of horse, honest men will follow them." The result was a curious medley of men of different ranks among the officers of the New Model. The bulk of those in high command remained men of noble or gentle blood, Montagues, Pickering, Fortescues, Sheffields, Sidneys, and the like. But side by side with these, though in far smaller proportion, were seen officers like Ewer, who had been a serving-man, like Okey, who had been a drayman, or Rainsborough, who had been a "skipper at sea." A result hardly less notable was the youth of the officers. Amongst those in high command there were few who, like Cromwell, had passed middle age. Fairfax was but thirty-three years old, and most of his colonels were even younger.

*The Army
and the
dissidents.*

Equally strange was the mixture of religions in its ranks. The remonstrances of the Presbyterians had only forced Cromwell's mind forward on the road of toleration. "The State, in choosing men to serve it," he wrote before Marston Moor, "takes no notice of these opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies." Marston Moor spurred him to press on the Parliament the need of at least "tolerating" dissidents; and he succeeded in procuring the appointment of a Committee of the Commons to find some means of effecting this. But the conservative temper of the bulk of the Puritans was at last roused by his efforts. "We detest and abhor," wrote the London clergy in 1645, "the much endeavoured Toleration;" and the Corporation of London petitioned Parliament to suppress all sects "without toleration." The Parliament itself too remained steady on the conservative side. But the fortunes of the war told for religious freedom. Essex and his Presbyterians only marched from defeat to defeat. In remodelling the army it was necessary to insert a clause in the Act which enabled Fairfax to dispense with the signature of the Covenant in the case of "godly

men;" for among the farmers from the eastern counties, who formed the bulk of its privates, dissidence of every type had gained a firm foothold.

Of the political and religious aspect of the New Model we shall have to speak at a later time; as yet its energy was directed solely to "the speedy and vigorous prosecution of the war." At the very moment when Fairfax was ready for action the policy of Cromwell was aided by the policy of the King. From the hour when Newbury marked the breach between the peace and war parties in the Parliament, and when the last became identified with the partisans of religious liberty, the Scotch Commissioners and the bulk of the Commons had seen that their one chance of hindering what they looked on as revolution in Church and State lay in pressing for fresh negotiations with Charles. These were opened at Uxbridge, and prolonged through the winter; but the hopes of concession which the King held out were suddenly withdrawn in the spring of 1645. He saw, as he thought, the Parliamentary army dissolved and ruined by its new modelling at an instant when news came from Scotland of fresh successes on the part of Montrose, and of his overthrow of the troops under Argyle's command in a victory at Inverlochy. "Before the end of the summer," wrote the conqueror, "I shall be in a position to come to your Majesty's aid with a brave army." He pressed Charles to advance to the Scottish border, where a junction of their armies might still suffice to crush any force the Parliament could bring against them. The party of war at once gained the ascendant in the royal councils. The negotiations at Uxbridge were broken off, and in May Charles opened his campaign by a march to the north.

At first all went well for the King. Leicester was stormed, the blockade of Chester raised, and the eastern counties threatened, until Fairfax, who had hoped to draw Charles back again by a blockade of Oxford, was forced to

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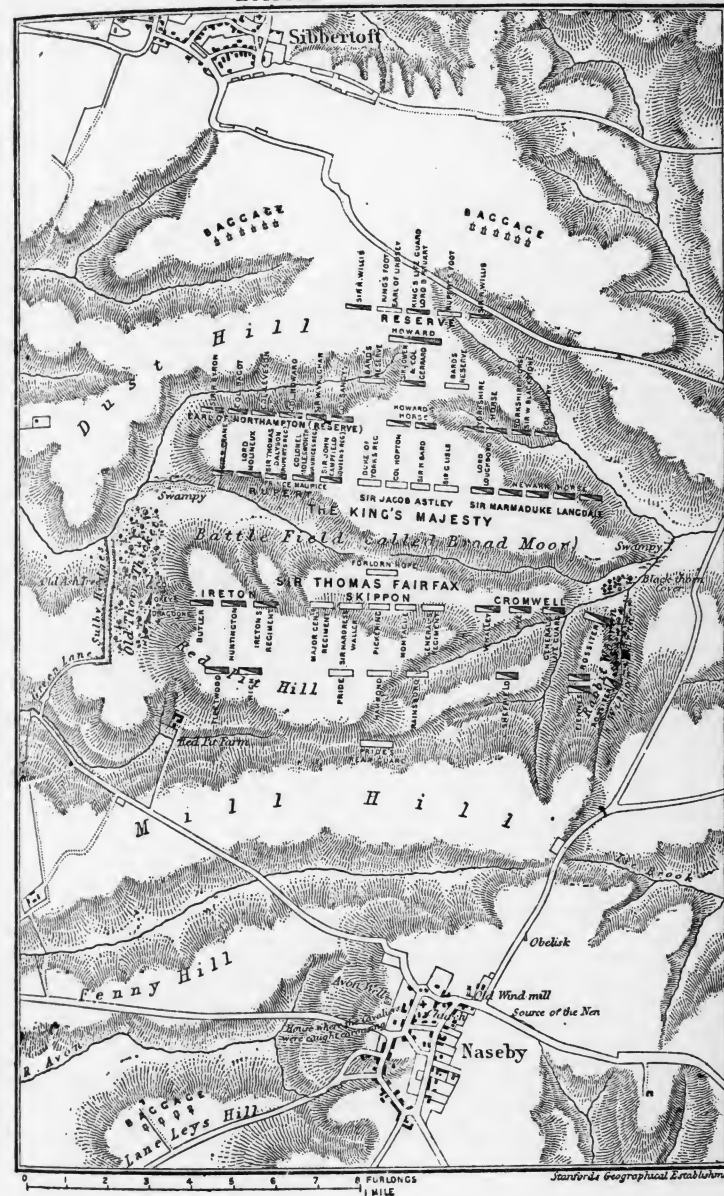
*Negotiations
at
Uxbridge.*

Naseby.

CHAP. IX. hurry on his track. Cromwell, who had been suffered by the House to retain his command for a few days in spite of the Ordinance, joined Fairfax as he drew near the King, and his arrival was greeted by loud shouts of welcome from the troops. On the fourteenth of June, 1645, the two armies met near Naseby, to the north-west of Northampton. The King was eager to fight; "Never have my affairs been in as good a state," he cried; and Prince Rupert was as impatient as his uncle. On the other side, even Cromwell doubted as a soldier the success of his newly-drilled troops, though his religious enthusiasm swept away doubt in the assurance of victory. "I can say this of Naseby," he wrote soon after, "that when I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor ignorant men, to seek to order our battle, the general having commanded me to order all the horse, I could not, riding alone about my business, but smile out to God in praises, in assurance of victory, because God would by things that are not bring to nought things that are. Of which I had great assurance, and God did it." The battle began with a furious charge of Rupert uphill, which routed the wing opposed to him under Ireton; while the royalist foot, after a single discharge, clubbed their muskets and fell on the centre under Fairfax so hotly that it slowly and stubbornly gave way. But the Ironsides were conquerors on the left. A single charge broke the northern horse under Langdale, who had already fled before them at Marston Moor; and holding his troops firmly in hand, Cromwell fell with them on the flank of the royalist foot in the very crisis of its success. A panic of the King's reserve, and its flight from the field, aided his efforts. It was in vain that Rupert returned with forces exhausted by pursuit, that Charles in a passion of despair called on his troopers for "one charge more." The battle was over: artillery, baggage, even the royal papers, fell into the conqueror's hands; five thousand men surrendered; and

BATTLE OF NASEBY.

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only two thousand followed the King in his headlong flight from the field.

The war was ended at a blow. While Charles wandered helplessly along the Welsh border in search of fresh forces, Fairfax marched rapidly on the south-west, where an organized royal force alone existed; routed Goring's force at Langport, in Somersetshire; broke up the royalist army; and in three weeks was master to the Land's End. A victory at Kilsyth, which gave Scotland for the moment to Montrose, threw a transient gleam over the darkening fortunes of his master's cause but the surrender of Bristol to the Parliamentary army, and the dispersion of the last force Charles could gather from Wales in an attempt to relieve Chester, was followed in September by news of the crushing and irretrievable defeat of the "Great Marquis" at Philiphaugh. In the wreck of the royal cause we may pause for a moment over an incident which brings out in relief the best temper of both sides. Cromwell, who was sweeping over the southern counties to trample out the last trace of resistance, "spent much time with God in prayer before the storm" of Basing House, where the Marquis of Winchester had held stoutly out through the war for the King. The storm ended its resistance, and the brave old Royalist was brought in a prisoner with his house flaming around him. He "broke out," reports a Puritan bystander, "and said, 'that if the King had no more ground in England but Basing House, he would adventure it as he did, and so maintain it to the uttermost,' comforting himself in this matter 'that Basing House was called Loyalty.'" Of loyalty such as this Charles was utterly unworthy. The seizure of his papers at Naseby had hardly disclosed his earlier intrigues with the Irish Catholics when the Parliament was able to reveal to England a fresh treaty with them, which purchased no longer their neutrality, but their aid, by the simple concession of every demand they had made. The shame was without profit,

CHAP. IX. for whatever aid Ireland might have given came too late
 The Civil War. to be of service. The spring of 1646 saw the few troops
 1642-1646. who still clung to Charles surrounded and routed at Stow.
 "You have done your work now," their leader, Sir Jacob
 Astley, said bitterly to his conquerors, "and may go to
 play, unless you fall out among yourselves."

CHAPTER X.

THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT.

1646—1649.

WITH the close of the Civil War we enter on a time of
 confused struggles, a time tedious and uninteresting in its
 outer details, but of higher interest than even the war it-
 self in its bearing on our after history. Modern England, the
 England among whose thoughts and sentiments we actually
 live, began, however dimly and darkly, with the triumph
 of Naseby. Old things passed silently away. When
 Astley gave up his sword the "work" of the generations
 which had struggled for Protestantism against Catholicism,
 for public liberty against absolute rule, in his own emphatic
 phrase, was "done." So far as these contests were con-
 cerned, however the later Stuarts might strive to revive
 them, England could safely "go to play." English religion
 was never to be more in danger. English liberty was never
 to be really in peril from the efforts of kings after a per-
 sonal rule. Whatever reaction might come about, it would
 never bring into question the great constitutional results
 that the Long Parliament had wrought. But with the
 end of this older work a new work began. The constitu-
 tional and ecclesiastical problems which still in one shape
 or another beset us started to the front as subjects of
 national debate in the years between the close of the
 Civil War and the death of the King. The great parties
 which have ever since divided the social, the political, and
 the religious life of England, whether as Independents
 and Presbyterians, as Whigs and Tories, as Conservatives

*The new
 struggle.*

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ment.
1646-
1649.

Religious
liberty.

and Liberals, sprang into organized existence in the contest between the Army and the Parliament. Then for the first time began a struggle which is far from having ended yet, the struggle between political tradition and political progress, between the principle of religious conformity and the principle of religious freedom.

It was the religious struggle which drew the political in its train. The victory of Naseby raised a wider question than that of mere toleration. "Honest men served you faithfully in this action," Cromwell wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons from the field. "Sir, they are trusty: I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience." The storm of Bristol encouraged him to proclaim the new principle yet more distinctly. "Presbyterians, Independents, all here have the same spirit of faith and prayer, the same presence and answer. They agree here, have no names of difference; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere. All that believe have the real unity, which is the most glorious, being the inward and spiritual, in the body and in the head. For being united in forms (commonly called uniformity), every Christian will for peace' sake study and do as far as conscience will permit. And from brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason." The increasing firmness of Cromwell's language was due to the growing irritation of his opponents. The two parties became every day more clearly defined. The Presbyterian ministers complained bitterly of the increase of the sectaries, and denounced the toleration which had come into practical existence without sanction from the law. Scotland, whose army was still before Newark, pressed for the execution of the Covenant and the universal enforcement of a religious uniformity. Sir Harry Vane, on the other hand, who now headed the party which advocated religious freedom in the Commons, strove to bring the Parliament

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Charles
in the
Scotch
camp.

round to less rigid courses by the introduction of two hundred and thirty new members, who filled the seats left vacant by the withdrawal of royalist members, and the more eminent of whom, such as Ireton and Algernon Sidney, were inclined to support the Independents. But the majority in both Houses still clung to the Tudor tradition of religious uniformity; and it was only the pressure of the New Model, and the remonstrances of Cromwell as its mouthpiece, that hindered any effective movement towards persecution.

Amidst the wreck of his fortunes Charles seized on the growing discord among his opponents as a means of retrieving all. He trusted that the dread of revolution would at last rally the whole body of conservative Englishmen round the royal standard; and it is likely enough that had he frankly flung himself on the side of the Parliament at this juncture he might have regained much of his older power. But, beaten and hunted as he was from place to place, he was determined to regain not much but all. The terms which the Houses offered were still severe; and Charles believed that a little kingcraft would free him from the need of accepting any terms whatever. He intrigued therefore busily with both parties, and promised liberty of worship to Vane and the Independents at the moment when he was negotiating with the Parliament and with the Scots. His negotiations were quickened by the march of Fairfax upon Oxford. Driven from his last refuge at the close of April 1646, the King had to choose between a flight from the realm or a surrender to one of the armies about him. Charles had no mind to forsake England when all seemed working for his success; and after some aimless wanderings he made his appearance in May in the camp of the Scots. The choice was dexterous enough. The Parliament and the army were still left face to face. On the other hand the Scots were indignant at what they regarded as a breach of faith in the toleration which existed in England, and

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Charles believed that his presence would at once rekindle their loyalty to a king of Scottish blood. But the results of his surrender were other than he had hoped. To the world at large his action seemed simply the prelude to an accommodation with his opponents on the ground of religious uniformity. This new aspect of affairs threatened the party of religious freedom with ruin. Hated as they were by the Scots, by the Lords, by the city of London, the apparent junction of Charles with their enemies destroyed their growing hopes in the Commons, where the prospects of a speedy peace on Presbyterian terms at once swelled the majority of their opponents. The two Houses laid their conditions of peace before the King without a dream of resistance from one who seemed to have placed himself at their mercy. They required for the Parliament the command of the army and fleet for twenty years; the exclusion of all "Malignants," or royalists who had taken part in the war, from civil and military office; the abolition of Episcopacy; and the establishment of a Presbyterian Church. Of toleration or liberty of conscience they said not a word.

The
King's
hopes.

The Scots, whose army had fallen back with its royal prize to Newcastle, pressed these terms on the King "with tears." His friends, and even the Queen, urged their acceptance. But the aim of Charles was simply delay. His surrender had not brought about the results he had hoped for; but he believed that time and the dissensions of his enemies were fighting for him. "I am not without hope," he wrote coolly, "that I shall be able to draw either the Presbyterians or the Independents to side with me for extirpating one another, so that I shall be really King again." With this end he refused the terms offered by the Houses. His refusal was a crushing defeat for the Presbyterians. "What will become of us," asked one of them, "now that the King has rejected our proposals?" "What would have become of us," retorted an Independent, "had he accepted them?" The vigour of

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Holles and the Conservative leaders in the Parliament rallied however to a bolder effort. It was plain that the King's game lay in balancing the army against the Parliament, and that the Houses could hope for no submission to these terms so long as the New Model was on foot. Nor could they venture in its presence to enforce religious uniformity, or to deal as they would have wished to deal with the theories of religious freedom which were every day becoming more popular. But while the Scotch army lay at Newcastle, and while it held the King in its hands, they could not insist on dismissing their own soldiers. It was only a withdrawal of the Scots from England and their transfer of the King's person into the hands of the Houses that would enable them to free themselves from the pressure of their own soldiers by disbanding the New Model.

Surrender
of the
King.

In his endeavour to bring these two measures about Holles met with an unexpected success. Hopeless of success in the projects of accommodation which they laid before the King, and unable to bring him into Scotland in face of the refusal of the General Assembly to receive a sovereign who would not swear to the Covenant, the Scottish army in January 1647 accepted £400,000 in discharge of its claims, handed Charles over to a committee of the Houses, and marched back over the Border. The success of their diplomacy restored the confidence of the Houses. The Presbyterian leaders looked on themselves as masters of the King, and they resolved to assert their mastery over the New Model and the sectaries. They voted that the army should be disbanded, and that a new army should be raised for the suppression of the Irish rebellion with Presbyterian officers at its head. It was in vain that the men protested against being severed from "officers that we love," and that the Council of Officers strove to gain time by pressing on the Parliament the danger of mutiny. Holles and his fellow-leaders were resolute, and their ecclesiastical legislation showed the end at which their

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resolution aimed. Direct enforcement of conformity was impossible till the New Model was disbanded; but the Parliament pressed on in the work of providing the machinery for enforcing it as soon as the army was gone. Vote after vote ordered the setting up of Presbyteries throughout the country, and the first-fruits of these efforts were seen in the Presbyterian organization of London, and in the first meeting of its Synod at St. Paul's. Even the officers on Fairfax's staff were ordered to take the Covenant.

*Temper of
the New
Model.*

All hung however on the disbanding of the New Model, and the New Model showed no will to disband itself. Its attitude can only fairly be judged by remembering what the conquerors of Naseby really were. They were soldiers of a different class and of a different temper from the soldiers of any other army that the world has seen. Their ranks were filled for the most part with young farmers and tradesmen of the lower sort, maintaining themselves, for their pay was twelve months in arrear, mainly at their own cost. They had been specially picked as "honest," or religious men, and, whatever enthusiasm or fanaticism they may have shown, their very enemies acknowledged the order and piety of their camp. They looked on themselves not as swordsmen, to be caught up and flung away at the will of a paymaster, but as men who had left farm and merchandise at a direct call from God. A great work had been given them to do, and the call bound them till it was done. Kingcraft, as Charles was hoping, might yet restore tyranny to the throne. A more immediate danger threatened that liberty of conscience which was to them "the ground of the quarrel, and for which so many of their friends' lives had been lost, and so much of their own blood had been spilt." They would wait before disbanding till these liberties were secured, and if need came they would again act to secure them. But their resolve sprang from no pride in the brute force of the sword they wielded. On the contrary, as they

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pleaded passionately at the bar of the Commons, "on becoming soldiers we have not ceased to be citizens." Their aims and proposals throughout were purely those of citizens, and of citizens who were ready the moment their aim was won to return peacefully to their homes. Thought and discussion had turned the army into a vast Parliament, a Parliament which regarded itself as a representative of "godly" men in as high a degree as the Parliament at Westminster, and which must have become every day more conscious of its superiority in political capacity to its rival. Ireton, the moving spirit of the New Model, had no equal as a statesman in St. Stephen's: nor is it possible to compare the large and far-sighted proposals of the army with the blind and narrow policy of the two Houses. Whatever we may think of the means by which the New Model sought its aims, we must in justice remember that, so far as those aims went, the New Model was in the right. For the last two hundred years England has been doing little more than carrying out in a slow and tentative way the scheme of political and religious reform which the army propounded at the close of the Civil War.

It was not till the rejection of the officers' proposals had left little hope of conciliation that the army acted, but its action was quick and decisive. It set aside for all political purposes the Council of Officers, by which its action had hitherto been directed, and elected a new Council of Adjutors or Assistants, two members being named by each regiment, which summoned a general meeting of the army at Triploe Heath, where the proposals of pay and disbanding made by the Parliament were rejected with cries of "Justice." While the army was gathering, in fact, the Adjutors had taken a step which put submission out of the question. A rumour that the King was to be removed to London, a new army raised by the Parliament in his name, and a new civil war begun, roused the soldiers to madness. Five hundred troopers appeared on the fourth of

*Its
seizure of
the King.*

CHAP. X. June before Holmby House, where the King was residing in charge of Parliamentary Commissioners, and displaced its guards. "Where is your commission for this act?" Charles asked the cornet who commanded them. "It is behind me," said Joyce, pointing to his soldiers. "It is written in very fine and legible characters," laughed the King. The seizure had in fact been previously concerted between Charles and the Adjutors. "I will part willingly," he told Joyce, "if the soldiers confirm all that you have promised me. You will exact from me nothing that offends my conscience or my honour." "It is not our maxim," replied the cornet, "to constrain the conscience of any one, still less that of our King." After a first burst of terror at the news, the Parliament fell furiously on Cromwell, who had relinquished his command and quitted the army before the close of the war, and had ever since been employed as a mediator between the two parties. The charge of having incited the mutiny fell before his vehement protest, but he was driven to seek refuge with the army, and on the twenty-fifth of June it was in full march upon London. Its demands were expressed with perfect clearness in an "Humble Representation" which it addressed to the Houses. "We desire a settlement of the Peace of the kingdom and of the liberties of the subject according to the votes and declarations of Parliament. We desire no alteration in the civil government: as little do we desire to interrupt or in the least to intermeddle with the settling of the Presbyterian government." What they demanded in religious matters was toleration; but "not to open a way to licentious living under pretence of obtaining ease for tender consciences, we profess, as ever, in these things when the state has made a settlement we have nothing to say, but to submit or suffer." It was with a view to such a settlement that they demanded the expulsion of eleven members from the Commons, with Holles at their head, whom the soldiers charged with stirring up strife between the army and the Parliament, and with a design

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of renewing the civil war. After fruitless negotiations the New Model drew close upon London; the terror of the Londoners forced the eleven to withdraw; and the Houses named Commissioners to treat on the questions at issue.

Though Fairfax and Cromwell had been forced from their position as mediators into a hearty co-operation with the army, its political direction rested at this moment with Cromwell's son-in-law, Henry Ireton, and Ireton looked for a real settlement, not to the Parliament, but to the King. "There must be some difference," he urged bluntly, "between conquerors and conquered;" but the terms which he laid before Charles were terms of studied moderation. The vindictive spirit which the Parliament had shown against the Royalists and the Church disappeared in the terms exacted by the New Model; and the army contented itself with the banishment of seven leading "delinquents," a general Act of Oblivion for the rest, the withdrawal of all coercive power from the clergy, the control of Parliament over the military and naval forces for ten years, and its nomination of the great officers of State. Behind these demands however came a masterly and comprehensive plan of political reform which had already been sketched by the army in the "Humble Representation," with which it had begun its march on London. Belief and worship were to be free to all. Acts enforcing the use of the Prayer-book, or attendance at Church, or the enforcement of the Covenant were to be repealed. Even Catholics, whatever other restraints might be imposed, were to be freed from the bondage of compulsory worship. Parliaments were to be triennial, and the House of Commons to be reformed by a fairer distribution of seats and of electoral rights; taxation was to be readjusted; legal procedure simplified; a crowd of political, commercial, and judicial privileges abolished. Ireton believed that Charles could be "so managed" (says Mrs. Hutchinson) "as to comply with the public good of his people after he

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*The Army
negotiates
with the
King.*

CHAP. X. could no longer uphold his violent will." But Charles was
 The Army equally dead to the moderation and to the wisdom of this
 and the great Act of Settlement. He saw in the crisis nothing but
 Parlia- an opportunity of balancing one party against another; and
 ment. believed that the army had more need of his aid than he of
 1646- the army's. "You cannot do without me—you are lost if
 1649. I do not support you," he said to Ireton as he pressed his
 — proposals. "You have an intention to be the arbitrator
 between us and the Parliament," Ireton quietly replied,
 "and we mean to be so between the Parliament and your
 Majesty."

Flight of the King. But the King's tone was soon explained. If London had
 been panic-stricken at the approach of the army, its panic
 soon disappeared. The great city was goaded to action
 by the humiliation of the Parliament, and still more by the
 triumph of religious liberty which seemed to be approach-
 ing through the negotiations of the army with the King.
 A mob of Londoners broke into the House of Commons,
 and forced its members to recall the eleven. The bulk of
 Vane's party, some fourteen peers and a hundred com-
 moners, fled to the army; while those who remained at
 Westminster prepared for an open struggle with it and
 invited Charles to return to London. But the news no
 sooner reached the camp than the army was again on the
 march. "In two days," Cromwell said coolly, "the city
 will be in our hands." On the sixth of August the
 soldiers entered London in triumph and restored the
 fugitive members; the eleven were once more expelled;
 and the army leaders resumed their negotiations with
 the King. The indignation of the soldiers at his delays
 and intrigues made their task hourly more difficult: but
 Cromwell, who now threw his whole weight on Ireton's
 side, clung to the hope of accommodation with a passionate
 tenacity. His mind, conservative by tradition, and above
 all practical in temper, saw the political difficulties which
 would follow on the abolition of Monarchy, and in spite of
 the King's evasions he persisted in negotiating with him.

But Cromwell stood almost alone. The Parliament refused
 to accept Ireton's proposals as a basis of peace; Charles
 still evaded; and the army grew restless and suspicious.
 There were cries for a wide reform, for the abolition of the
 House of Peers, for a new House of Commons; and the
 adjutators called on the Council of Officers to discuss the
 question of abolishing Royalty itself. Cromwell was never
 braver than when he faced the gathering storm, forbade
 the discussion, adjourned the Council, and sent the officers
 to their regiments. But the strain was too great to last
 long, and Charles was still resolute to "play his game."
 He was in fact so far from being in earnest in his negotiation
 with Cromwell and Ireton that at the moment they were
 risking their lives for him he was conducting another and
 equally delusive negotiation with the Parliament, foment-
 ing the discontent in London, and preparing for a fresh
 royalist rising. What he still more counted on was aid
 from the north. The intervention of the Scots had
 ruined his cause, but their intervention might again restore
 it. The practical suspensio of the Covenant and the
 triumph of the party of religious liberty in England had
 produced a violent reaction across the Tweed. Argyle
 and the zealous Presbyterians still clung to the alliance
 between the two countries, though it disappointed their
 hopes; but Hamilton, who had now become a Duke, put
 himself at the head of the more moderate religionists, and
 carried the elections for a new Parliament. Charles at once
 saw the results of the Duke's success. "The two nations,"
 he wrote joyously, "will soon be at war." All that was
 needed for the success of these schemes was his own liberty;
 and in November, 1647, in the midst of their hopes of an
 accommodation, the army leaders learned that they had
 been duped throughout, and that the King had fled.

The flight fanned the excitement of the New Model into
 frenzy, and only the courage of Cromwell averted an open
 mutiny in its gathering at Ware. But even Cromwell was
 powerless to break the spirit which now pervaded the

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*The
 second
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CHAP. X. soldiers, and the King's perfidy left him without resources. "The King is a man of great parts and great understanding," he said, "but so great a dissembler and so false a man that he is not to be trusted." The danger from his escape indeed soon passed away. By a strange error Charles had ridden from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight, perhaps with some hope from the sympathy of Colonel Hammond, the Governor of Carisbrook Castle, and again found himself a prisoner. But the wider perils remained. Foiled in his effort to put himself at the head of the new civil war, the King set himself to organize it from his prison; and while again opening delusive negotiations with the two Houses he signed a secret treaty with the Scots for the invasion of the realm. All that Hamilton needed to bring the new Scotch Parliament to an active support of the King was his assent to a stipulation for the re-establishment of Presbytery in England. This Charles at last brought himself to give in the spring of 1648, and the Scots at once ordered an army to be levied for his support. In England the whole of the conservative party, with many of the most conspicuous members of the Long Parliament at its head, was drifting in its horror of the religious and political changes which seemed impending towards the King; and at the close of May the news from Scotland gave the signal for fitful insurrections in almost every quarter. London was only held down by main force, old officers of the Parliament unfurled the royal flag in South Wales, and surprized Pembroke. The seizure of Berwick and Carlisle opened a way for the Scotch invasion. Kent, Essex, and Hertford broke out in revolt. The fleet in the Downs sent their captains on shore, hoisted the King's pennon, and blockaded the Thames.

*The
Houses
and the
Army.*

"The hour is come," cried Cromwell, "for the Parliament to save the kingdom and to govern alone." But the Parliament showed no will to "govern alone." It looked on the rising and the intervention of the Scots as means of freeing it from the control under which it had been

writhing since the expulsion of the eleven. It took advantage of the crisis to profess its adherence to Monarchy, to re-open the negotiations it had broken off with the King, and to deal the fiercest blow at religious freedom which it had ever received. The Presbyterians flocked back to their seats; and an "Ordinance for the Suppression of Blasphemies and Heresies," which Vane and Cromwell had long held at bay, was passed by triumphant majorities. Any man—ran this terrible statute—denying the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Divinity of Christ, or that the books of Scripture are "the Word of God," or the resurrection of the body, or a future day of judgement, and refusing on trial to abjure his heresy, "shall suffer the pain of death." Any man declaring (amidst a long list of other errors) "that man by nature hath free will to turn to God," that there is a Purgatory, that images are lawful, that infant baptism is unlawful; any one denying the obligation of observing the Lord's day, or asserting "that the Church government by Presbytery is anti-Christian or unlawful," shall, on a refusal to renounce his errors; "be commanded to prison." It was plain that the Presbyterians counted on the King's success to resume their policy of conformity, and had Charles been free, or the New Model disbanded, their hopes would probably have been realized.

But Charles was still safe at Carisbrook; and the New Model was facing fiercely the danger which surrounded it. The wanton renewal of the war at a moment when all tended to peace swept from the mind of Fairfax and Cromwell, as from that of the army at large, every thought of reconciliation with the King. Soldiers and generals were at last bound together again in a stern resolve. On the eve of their march against the revolt all gathered in a solemn prayer-meeting, and came "to a very clear and joint resolution, 'That it was our duty if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to account for the

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Invasion.*

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blood he has shed and mischief he has done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in this poor nation.' " The stern resolve was followed by vigorous action. In a few days Fairfax had trampled down the Kentish insurgents, and had prisoned those of the eastern counties within the walls of Colchester, while Cromwell drove the Welsh insurgents within those of Pembroke. Both towns however held stubbornly out; and though a rising under Lord Holland in the neighbourhood of London was easily put down, there was no force left to stem the inroad of the Scots, who poured over the Border at the opening of July some twenty thousand strong. Luckily the surrender of Pembroke at this critical moment set Cromwell free. Pushing rapidly northward with five thousand men, he called in a force under Lambert which had been gallantly hanging on the Scottish flank, and pushed over the Yorkshire hills into the valley of the Ribble, where the Duke of Hamilton, reinforced by three thousand royalists of the north, had advanced as far as Preston. With an army which now numbered ten thousand men, Cromwell poured down on the flank of the Duke's straggling line of march, attacked the Scots on the seventeenth of August as they retired behind the Ribble, passed the river with them, cut their rearguard to pieces at Wigan, forced the defile at Warrington, where the flying enemy made a last and desperate stand, and drove their foot to surrender, while Lambert hunted down Hamilton and the horse. Fresh from its victory, the New Model pushed over the Border, while the peasants of Ayrshire and the west rose in a "Whiggamore raid" (notable as the first event in which we find the name "Whig," which is possibly the same as our "Whey," and conveys a taunt against the "sour-milk" faces of the fanatical Ayrshiremen), and, marching upon Edinburgh, in September, dispersed the royalist party and again installed Argyle in power.

*Demand
of justice
on the
King.*

Argyle welcomed Cromwell as a deliverer, but the

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victorious general had hardly entered Edinburgh when he was recalled by pressing news from the south. The temper with which the Parliament had met the royalist revolt was, as we have seen, widely different from that of the army. It had recalled the eleven members, and had passed the Ordinance against heresy. At the moment of the victory at Preston the Lords were discussing charges of treason against Cromwell, while in September commissioners were again sent to the Isle of Wight, in spite of the resistance of the Independents, to conclude peace with the King. Royalists and Presbyterians alike pressed Charles to grasp the easy terms which were now offered him. But if his hopes from Scotland had utterly broken down, they had given place to hopes of a new war with the aid of an army from Ireland; and the negotiators of the Houses saw forty days wasted in useless chicanery. "Nothing," Charles wrote to his friends, "is changed in my designs." With Ireland and Scotland on his side, with royalists still in arms in the eastern counties, with the Houses at issue with the army, and as it seemed on the point of yielding unconditionally to the King in their dread of organic changes he believed that the hour of his triumph was at last at hand. But the surrender of Colchester to Fairfax in August and Cromwell's convention with Argyle had now set free the army, and it at once struck fiercely at its foes. Petitions from its regiments demanded "justice on the King." A fresh "Remonstrance" from the Council of Officers called for the election of a new Parliament; for electoral reform; for the recognition of the supremacy of the Houses "in all things"; for the change of kingship, should it be retained, into a magistracy elected by the Parliament, and without veto on its proceedings. Above all they demanded "that the capital and grand author of our troubles, by whose commissions, commands, and procurements, and in whose behalf and for whose interest only, of will and power, all our wars and troubles have been, with all the miseries attending them, may be specially

CHAP. X. brought to justice for the treason, blood, and mischief he is therein guilty of."

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and the
Parliament.

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Pride's
purge.

The demand drove the Houses to despair. That the King should be forced back into legal courses, and if need be forced by stress of arms, seemed to the bulk of the English gentry who were ranged on the Parliament side a necessity, though a hard necessity. But the tradition of loyalty, of reverence for the crown, was strong even in the men who had fought hardest against Charles. They shrank with horror from the sight of a king at the bar of a court of justice, or yet more on the scaffold. The demand for a new Parliament was hardly less horrible. A new Parliament meant the rule of the sectaries, a revolution in the whole political and religious system of the realm. To give way to Charles altogether, to surrender all that the war had gained, seemed better than this. Their reply to the Remonstrance was to accept the King's concessions, unimportant as they were, as a basis of peace. The calculations of Charles were verified by the surrender of his old opponents; but the surrender came too late to save either Parliament or King. The step was accepted by the soldiers as a defiance. On the thirtieth of November Charles was again seized by a troop of horse, and carried off to Hurst Castle, while a letter from Fairfax announced the march of his army upon London. "We shall know now," said Vane, as the troops took their post round the Houses of Parliament, "who is on the side of the King, and who on the side of the people." But the terror of the army proved weaker among the members than the agonized loyalty which strove to save the monarchy and the Church; and a large majority in both Houses still voted for the acceptance of the terms which Charles had offered. The next morning, that of the sixth of December, saw Colonel Pride at the door of the House of Commons with a list of forty members of the majority in his hands. The Council of Officers had resolved to exclude them, and as each member made his appearance

he was arrested, and put in confinement. "By what right do you act?" a member asked. "By the right of the sword," Hugh Peters is said to have replied. The House was still resolute, but on the following morning forty more members were excluded, and the rest gave way.

The sword had fallen; and the old system of English government sank helplessly beneath the blow. The two great powers which had waged this bitter conflict, the Parliament and the Monarchy, suddenly disappeared. The expulsion of one hundred and forty members, in a word of the majority of the existing House, reduced the Commons to a name. The remnant who remained to co-operate with the army were, in the coarse imagery of popular speech but the "rump" of a Parliament. Their will was no longer representative of the will of the country; their acts were no longer national acts. They were simply the acts of a body of partizans who had the luck to find themselves on the side of the sword. While the House of Commons dwindled to a sham, the House of Lords passed away altogether. The effect of Pride's purge was seen in a resolution of the Rump for the trial of Charles and the nomination on the first of January, 1649, of a Court of one hundred and fifty Commissioners to conduct it, with John Bradshaw, a lawyer of eminence, at their head. The rejection of this Ordinance by the few peers who remained brought about a fresh resolution from the members who remained in the Lower House, "that the People are, under God, the original of all just power; that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled—being chosen by, and representing, the People—have the supreme power in this nation; and that whatsoever is enacted and declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of a law, and all the people of this nation are concluded thereby, although the consent and concurrence of the King or House of Peers be not had hereunto."

And with the ruin of the Parliament went the ruin of

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Ruin of
the
Parliament.

Death of
the King.

CHAP. X. the Monarchy. On the twentieth of January Charles appeared before Bradshaw's Court only to deny its competence and to refuse to plead; but thirty-two witnesses were examined to satisfy the consciences of his judges, and it was not till the fifth day of the trial that he was condemned to death as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and enemy of his country. The popular excitement vented itself in cries of "Justice," or "God save your Majesty," as the trial went on, but all save the loud outcries of the soldiers was hushed as, on the 30th of January, 1649, Charles passed to his doom. The dignity which he had failed to preserve in his long jangling with Bradshaw and the judges returned at the call of death. Whatever had been the faults and follies of his life, "he nothing common did, nor mean, upon that memorable scene." Two masked executioners awaited the King as he mounted the scaffold, which had been erected outside one of the windows of the Banqueting House at Whitehall; the streets and roofs were thronged with spectators; and a strong body of soldiers stood drawn up beneath. His head fell at the first blow, and as the executioner lifted it to the sight of all a groan of pity and horror burst from the silent crowd.

*Abolition
of
Monarchy.*

The delays and hesitation which marked the action of the Commons on the King's death showed how stunned they were by the revolution which they were driven to bring about. To replace Charles by a new king was impossible. His son alone would be owned as sovereign by the bulk of the nation; and no friendship was possible between the men who now held England in their grasp and the son of the man they had sent to the block. But it was only slowly that they bowed to necessity. It was not till the seventeenth of March that monarchy was formally abolished; and two months more elapsed before the passing of that memorable Act of the nineteenth of May which declared "that the People of England and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging are, and shall be, and are

hereby constituted, made, established, and confirmed, to be a Commonwealth and Free State, and shall henceforth be governed as a Commonwealth and Free State by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the People in Parliament, and by such as they shall appoint and constitute officers and ministers for the good of the People, and that without any King or House of Lords."

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ment.
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CHAPTER XI.

THE COMMONWEALTH.

1649—1653.

*Dangers
of the
Common-
wealth.*

THE news of the King's death was received throughout Europe with a thrill of horror. The Czar of Russia chased the English envoy from his court. The ambassador of France was withdrawn on the proclamation of the Republic. The Protestant powers of the Continent seemed more anxious than any to disavow all connexion with a Protestant people who had brought their King to the block. Holland took the lead in acts of open hostility to the new power as soon as the news of the execution reached the Hague. The States-General waited solemnly on the Prince of Wales, who took the title of Charles the Second, and recognized him as "Majesty," while they refused an audience to the English envoys. Their Stadtholder, his brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, was supported by popular sympathy in the aid and encouragement he afforded to Charles; and eleven ships of the English fleet, which had found a refuge at the Hague ever since their revolt from the Parliament, were suffered to sail under Rupert's command, and to render the seas unsafe for English traders. The danger however was far greater nearer home. In Scotland even the zealous Presbyterians whom Cromwell had restored to power refused to follow England on its rejection of monarchy. Argyle and his fellow-leaders proclaimed Charles the Second as King on the news of his father's death; and at once despatched an embassy to the Hague to invite him to ascend the throne. In Ireland

the factions who ever since the rebellion had turned the country into a chaos, the old Irish Catholics or native party under Owen Roe O'Neil, the Catholics of the English Pale, the Episcopalian Royalists, the Presbyterian Royalists of the north, had at last been brought to some sort of union by the diplomacy of Ormond; and Ormond called on Charles to land at once in a country where he would find three-fourths of its people devoted to his cause.

Of the dangers which threatened the new Commonwealth some were more apparent than real. The rivalry of France and Spain, both anxious for its friendship, secured it from the hostility of the greater powers of the Continent; and the ill-will of Holland could be delayed, if not averted, by negotiations. The acceptance of the Covenant was insisted on by Scotland before it would formally receive Charles as its ruler, and nothing but necessity would induce him to comply with such a demand. On the side of Ireland the danger was more pressing, and an army of twelve thousand men was set apart for a vigorous prosecution of the Irish war. But the real difficulties were the difficulties at home. The death of Charles gave fresh vigour to the royalist cause; and the loyalty which it revived was stirred to enthusiasm by the publication of the "Eikon Basilike," a work really due to the ingenuity of Dr. Gauden, a Presbyterian minister, but which was believed to have been composed by the King himself in his later hours of captivity, and which reflected with admirable skill the hopes, the suffering, and the piety of the royal "martyr." For a moment there were dreams of a rising, which had to be roughly checked by the execution of the Duke of Hamilton and Lords Holland and Capell, who had till now been confined in the Tower. But the popular disaffection was a far more serious matter than these royalist intrigues. It was soon plain that the revolution which had struck down Parliament and monarchy alike was without sanction from the nation at

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—

*England
and the
Common-
wealth.*

CHAP. XI. large. The government of the country had been provided for by the creation of a Council of State, consisting of forty-one members selected from what was left of the Commons, and who were entrusted with full executive power at home and abroad. But if the Rump consented to profit by the work of the soldiers, it showed no will to signify its approval of it. A majority of the members of the Council declined the oath offered to them at their earliest meeting, pledging them to an approval of the King's death and the establishment of the Commonwealth. In the nation at large the repudiation of the army's work was universal. Half the judges retired from the bench. Thousands of refusals met the demand of an engagement to be faithful to the Republic which was made from all benefited clergymen and public functionaries. It was not till May, and even then in spite of the ill-will of the citizens, that the Council ventured to proclaim the Commonwealth in London.

*Designs
of the
Rump.*

It was plain that England had no mind to see her old parliamentary liberties set aside for a military rule. But in truth the army itself never dreamed of establishing such a rule. Still less did it dream of leaving the conduct of affairs in the hands of the small body of members who still called themselves the House of Commons, a body which numbered hardly a hundred, and whose average attendance was little more than fifty. In reducing it by "Pride's Purge" to the mere shadow of a House the army had never contemplated its continuance as a permanent assembly: it had, in fact, insisted as a condition of even its temporary continuance that it should prepare a bill for the summoning of a fresh Parliament. The plan put forward by the Council of Officers is still interesting as the basis of many later efforts towards parliamentary reform. It advised a dissolution in the spring, the assembling every two years of a new Parliament consisting of four hundred members, elected by all householders rateable to the poor, and a redistribution of seats which would have given the

privilege of representation to every place of importance. Paid military officers and civil officials were excluded from election. The plan was apparently accepted by the Commons, and a bill based on it was again and again discussed. But it was soon whispered about that the House had no mind to dissolve itself. Whatever might be the hopes of the soldiers or their leaders, the shrewder statesmen who sate at Westminster knew that the country was eager to undo the work that had been done; and that the first effort of a fairly chosen Parliament would be to put an end to the Commonwealth and to religious liberty. Their aim therefore was to gain time; to continue their rule till what they looked on as a passing phase of national feeling had disappeared, and till the great results which they looked for from their policy both at home and abroad had reconciled the nation to the new system of government. In a witty paraphrase of the story of Moses, Henry Martyn was soon to picture the Commonwealth as a new-born and delicate babe, and hint that "no one is so proper to bring it up as the mother who has brought it into the world." Secret as this purpose was kept, suspicions of it no sooner stole abroad than the popular discontent found a mouthpiece in John Lilburne, a brave, hot-headed soldier, and the excitement of the army appeared in a formidable mutiny in May. But the leaders of the army set all suspicion aside. "You must cut these people in pieces," Cromwell broke out in the Council of State, "or they will cut you in pieces;" and a forced march of fifty miles to Burford enabled him to burst with Fairfax on the mutinous regiments at midnight, and to stamp out the revolt.

But resolute as he was against disorder, Cromwell went honestly with the army in its demand of a new Parliament; he believed, and in his harangue to the mutineers he pledged himself to the assertion, that the House purposed to dissolve itself. In spite of the delays thrown in the way of the bill for a new Representative body Cromwell

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*Cromwell
in Ireland.*

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entertained no serious suspicion of the Parliament's design when he was summoned to Ireland by a series of royalist successes which left only Dublin in the hands of the Parliamentary forces. With Scotland threatening war, and a naval struggle impending with Holland, it was necessary that the work of the army in Ireland should be done quickly. The temper too of Cromwell and his soldiers was one of vengeance, for the horror of the Irish massacre remained living in every English breast, and the revolt was looked upon as a continuance of the massacre. "We are come," he said on his landing, "to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed, and to endeavour to bring to an account all who by appearing in arms shall justify the same." A sortie from Dublin had already broken up Ormond's siege of the capital; and feeling himself powerless to keep the field before the new army, the Marquis had thrown his best troops, three thousand Englishmen under Sir Arthur Aston, as a garrison into Drogheda. Cromwell landed in Ireland on the fifteenth of August, 1649; and his storm of Drogheda in September was the first of a series of awful massacres. The garrison fought bravely, and repulsed the first attack; but a second drove Aston and his force back to the Mill-Mount. "Our men getting up to them," ran Cromwell's terrible despatch, "were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town, and I think that night they put to death about two thousand men." A few fled to St. Peter's church, "whereupon I ordered the steeple to be fired, where one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames: 'God damn me, I burn, I burn.'" "In the church itself nearly one thousand were put to the sword. I believe all their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously but two," but these were the sole exceptions to the rule of killing the soldiers only. At a later time Cromwell challenged his enemies to give "an instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, not in arms,

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massacred, destroyed, or banished." But for soldiers there was no mercy. Of the remnant who surrendered through hunger, "when they submitted, their officers were knocked on the head, every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes." "I am persuaded," the despatch ends, "that this is a righteous judgement of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future."

A detachment sufficed to relieve Derry and to quiet Ulster; and Cromwell turned to the south, where as stout a defence was followed by as terrible a massacre at Wexford. A fresh success at Ross brought him to Waterford; but the city held stubbornly out, disease thinned his army, where there was scarce an officer who had not been sick, and the general himself was arrested by illness. At last the tempestuous weather drove him into winter quarters at Cork with his work half done. The winter of 1649 was one of terrible anxiety. The Parliament was showing less and less inclination to dissolve itself, and was meeting the growing discontent by a stricter censorship of the press and a fruitless prosecution of John Lilburne. English commerce was being ruined by the piracies of Rupert's fleet, which now anchored at Kinsale to support the royalist cause in Ireland. The energy of Vane indeed had already re-created a navy, squadrons of which were being despatched into the British seas, the Mediterranean, and the Levant; and Colonel Blake, who had distinguished himself by his heroic defence of Taunton during the war, was placed at the head of a fleet which drove Rupert from the Irish coast, and finally blockaded him in the Tagus. But even the energy of Vane quailed before the danger which now broke on England from the Scots. "One must go and die there," the young King cried at the news of Ormond's defeat before Dublin, "for it is shameful for me to live elsewhere." But his ardour for an Irish campaign cooled as Cromwell marched

*Charles
and the
Scots.*

CHAP. XI. from victory to victory; and from the isle of Jersey, which alone remained faithful to him of all his southern dominions, Charles renewed the negotiations with Scotland which his hopes from Ireland had broken. They were again delayed by a proposal on the part of Montrose to attack the very Government with whom his master was negotiating; but the failure and death of the Marquis in the spring of 1650 forced Charles to accept the Presbyterian conditions; and while an army was raised in the north, the young King prepared to cross to his Scottish dominions.

Cromwell in Scotland. Dismayed as they were, the English leaders resolved to anticipate the danger by attacking the new enemy in his own home; but the Lord-General Fairfax, while willing to defend England against a Scotch invasion, scrupled to take the lead in an invasion of Scotland. The Council recalled Cromwell from Ireland, but his cooler head saw that there was yet time to finish his work in the west. During the winter he had been busily preparing for a new campaign, and it was only after the storm of Clonmell and the overthrow of the Irish army under Hugh O'Neill in the hottest fight the army had yet fought, that he embarked for England. The new Lord-General entered London amidst the shouts of a great multitude; and in July, 1650, but a month after Charles had landed on the shores of Scotland, the English army crossed the Tweed fifteen thousand men strong. But the terror of his massacres in Ireland hung round its leader, the country was deserted as he advanced, and he was forced to cling for provisions to a fleet which sailed along the coast. The Scotch general, Leslie, with a larger force, refused battle, and lay obstinately in his lines between Edinburgh and Leith. A march of the English army round his position to the slopes of the Pentlands only brought about a change of the Scottish front; and as Cromwell fell back baffled upon Dunbar, Leslie encamped upon the heights above the town, and cut off the English retreat along the

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coast by the seizure of Cockburnspath. His post was almost unassailable, while the soldiers of Cromwell were sick and starving; and their general had resolved on an embarkation of his forces when he saw in the dusk of evening signs of movement in the Scottish camp. Leslie's caution had at last been overpowered by the zeal of the preachers, and on the morning of the third of September the Scotch army moved down to the lower ground between the hillside on which it was encamped and a little brook which covered the English front. Leslie's horse was far in advance of the main body, and it had hardly reached the level ground when Cromwell in the dim dawn flung his whole force upon it. "They run, I profess they run!" he cried as the Scotch horse broke after a desperate resistance, and threw into confusion the foot who were hurrying to its aid. Then, as the sun rose over the mist of the morning, he added in nobler words: "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered! Like as the mist vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away!" In less than an hour the victory was complete. The defeat at once became a rout; ten thousand prisoners were taken, with all the baggage and guns; three thousand were slain, with scarce any loss on the part of the conquerors. Leslie reached Edinburgh, a general without an army.

The effect of Dunbar was at once seen in the attitude of the Continental powers. Spain hastened to recognize the Republic, and Holland offered its alliance. But Cromwell was watching with anxiety the growing discontent at home. He was anxious for a "settlement." He knew that for such a settlement a new Parliament was necessary, and that England would never consent to be ruled against her will by the mere rump of members gathered at Westminster. Yet every day made it plainer that it was their purpose to continue to rule her. The general amnesty claimed by Ireton and the bill for the Parliament's dissolution still hung on hand; the reform of the courts of justice, which had been pressed by the army, failed before

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Break
with
Holland.

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the obstacles thrown in its way by the lawyers in the Commons. "Relieve the oppressed," Cromwell wrote from Dunbar, "hear the groans of poor prisoners. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. If there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." But the House was seeking to turn the current of public opinion in favour of its own continuance by a great diplomatic triumph. It resolved secretly on the wild project of bringing about a union between England and Holland, and it took advantage of Cromwell's victory to despatch Oliver St. John with a stately embassy to the Hague. His rejection of an alliance and Treaty of Commerce which the Dutch offered was followed by the disclosure of the English proposal of union. The proposal was at once refused by the States; and the envoys, who returned angrily to the Parliament, attributed their failure to the posture of affairs in Scotland. Charles was preparing there for a new campaign. Humiliation after humiliation had been heaped on the young King since he landed in his northern realm. He had subscribed to the covenant; he had listened to sermons and scoldings from the ministers; he was called on at last to sign a declaration that acknowledged the tyranny of his father and the idolatry of his mother. Hardened and shameless as he was, the young King for a moment recoiled. "I could never look my mother in the face again," he cried, "after signing such a paper;" but he signed. He was still however a King only in name, shut out from the Council and the army, with his friends excluded from all part in government or the war. But he was freed by the victory of Dunbar. "I believe that the King will set up on his own score now," Cromwell wrote after his victory, as he advanced to occupy Edinburgh while the royal forces fell back upon Stirling and Perth. With the overthrow of Leslie in fact the power of Argyle and the narrow Presbyterians whom he led came to an end. Hamilton, the brother and

successor of the Duke who had been captured at Preston, CHAP. XI.
brought back the Royalists to the camp, and Charles insisted on taking part in the Council and on being crowned at Scone. The
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Master of Edinburgh, but failed in an attack on Stirling, Cromwell waited through the winter and the long spring of 1651, while intestine feuds broke up the nation opposed to him, and while the stricter Covenanters retired sulkily from the King's army on the return of the "Malig-nants," the royalists of the earlier war, to its ranks. With summer the campaign recommenced, but Leslie again fell back on his system of positions, and Cromwell, finding his camp at Stirling unassailable, crossed into Fife and left the road open to the south. The bait was taken. In spite of Leslie's counsels Charles resolved to invade England, and call the royalist party again to revolt. He was soon in full march through Lancashire upon the Severn, with the English horse under Lambert hanging on his rear, and the English foot hastening by York and Coventry to close the road to London. "We have done to the best of our judgement," Cromwell replied to the angry alarm of the Parliament, "knowing that if some issue were not put to this business it would occasion another winter's war." At Coventry he learned Charles's position, and swept round by Evesham upon Worcester, where the Scotch King was encamped. Throwing half his force across the river, Cromwell attacked the town on both sides on the third of September, the anniversary of his victory at Dunbar. He led the van in person, and was "the first to set foot on the enemy's ground." When Charles descended from the cathedral tower to fling himself on the division which remained eastward of the Severn, Cromwell hurried back across the river, and was soon "riding in the midst of the fire." For four or five hours, he told the Parliament, "it was as stiff a contest as ever I have seen;" for though the Scots were outnumbered and beaten into the city, they gave no answer but shot to offers of quarter, and

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it was not till nightfall that all was over. The loss of the victors was as usual inconsiderable. The conquered lost six thousand men, and all their baggage and artillery. Leslie was among the prisoners: Hamilton among the dead. Charles himself fled from the field; and after months of strange wanderings and adventures made his escape to France.

"Now that the King is dead and his son defeated," Cromwell said gravely to the Parliament, "I think it necessary to come to a settlement." But the settlement which had been promised after Naseby was still as distant as ever after Worcester. The bill for dissolving the present Parliament, though Cromwell pressed it in person, was only passed, after bitter opposition, by a majority of two: and even this success had to be purchased by a compromise which permitted the House to sit for three years more. Internal affairs were almost at a deadlock. The Parliament appointed committees to prepare plans for legal reforms or for ecclesiastical reforms, but it did nothing to carry them into effect. It was overpowered by the crowd of affairs which the confusion of the war had thrown into its hands, by confiscations, sequestrations, appointments to civil and military offices, in fact the whole administration of the state; and there were times when it was driven to a resolve not to take any private affairs for weeks together in order that it might make some progress with public business. To add to this confusion and muddle there were the inevitable scandals which arose from it; charges of malversation and corruption were hurled at the members of the House; and some, like Haselrig, were accused with justice of using their power to further their own interests. The one remedy for all this was, as the army saw, the assembly of a new and complete Parliament in place of the mere "rump" of the old, but this was the one measure which the House was resolute to avert. Vane spurred it to a new activity. In February 1652, the Amnesty Bill was forced through after

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fifteen divisions. A Grand Committee, with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was appointed to consider the reform of the law. A union with Scotland was pushed resolutely forward; eight English Commissioners convoked a Convention of delegates from its counties and boroughs at Edinburgh, and, in spite of dogged opposition, procured a vote in favour of the proposal. A bill was introduced which gave legal form to the union, and admitted representatives from Scotland into the next Parliament. A similar plan was proposed for a union with Ireland.

But it was necessary for Vane's purposes not only to show the energy of the Parliament, but to free it from the control of the army. His aim was to raise in the navy a force devoted to the House, and to eclipse the glories of Dunbar and Worcester by yet greater triumphs at sea. With this view the quarrel with Holland had been carefully nursed; a "Navigation Act," prohibiting the importation in foreign vessels of any but the products of the countries to which they belonged, struck a fatal blow at the carrying trade from which the Dutch drew their wealth; and fresh debates arose from the English claim to salutes from all vessels in the Channel. In May, 1652, the two fleets met before Dover, and a summons from Blake to lower the Dutch flag was met by the Dutch admiral, Van Tromp, with a broadside. The States-General attributed the collision to accident, and offered to recall Van Tromp; but the English demands rose at each step in the negotiations till war became inevitable. The army hardly needed the warning conveyed by the introduction of a bill for its disbanding to understand the new policy of the Parliament. It was significant that while accepting the bill for its own dissolution the House had as yet prepared no plan for the assembly which was to follow it; and the Dutch war had hardly been declared when, abandoning the attitude of inaction which it had observed since the beginning of the Commonwealth, the army petitioned, not only for reform in Church and State, but for an explicit declaration

CHAP. XI. that the House would bring its proceedings to a close. The Petition forced the House to discuss a bill for "a New Representative," but the discussion soon brought out the resolve of the sitting members to continue as a part of the coming Parliament without re-election. The officers, irritated by such a claim, demanded in conference after conference an immediate dissolution, and the House as resolutely refused. In ominous words Cromwell supported the demand of the army. "As for the members of this Parliament, the army begins to take them in disgust. I would it did so with less reason." There was just ground, he urged, for discontent in their selfish greed of houses and lands, the scandalous lives of many, their partiality as judges, their interference with the ordinary course of law in matters of private interest, their delay of law reform, above all in their manifest design of perpetuating their own power. "There is little to hope for from such men," he ended with a return to his predominant thought, "for a settlement of the nation."

Blake. For the moment the crisis was averted by the events of the war. A terrible storm had separated the two fleets when on the point of engaging in the Orkneys, but Ruyter and Blake met again in the Channel, and after a fierce struggle the Dutch were forced to retire under cover of night. Since the downfall of Spain Holland had been the first naval power in the world, and the spirit of the nation rose gallantly with its earliest defeat. Immense efforts were made to strengthen the fleet; and the veteran, Van Tromp, who was replaced at its head, appeared in the Channel with seventy-three ships of war. Blake had but half the number, but he at once accepted the challenge, and throughout the twenty-eighth of November the unequal fight went on doggedly till nightfall, when the English fleet withdrew shattered into the Thames. Tromp swept the Channel in triumph, with a broom at his masthead; and the tone of the Commons lowered with the defeat of their favourite force. A compromise seems to have been

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arranged between the two parties, for the bill providing a new Representative was again pushed on; and the Parliament agreed to retire in the coming November, while Cromwell offered no opposition to a reduction of the army. But the courage of the House rose afresh with a turn of fortune. The strenuous efforts of Blake enabled him again to put to sea in a few months after his defeat; and in February, 1653, a running fight through four days ended at last in an English victory, though Tromp's fine seamanship enabled him to save the convoy he was guarding. The House at once insisted on the retention of its power. Not only were the existing members to continue as members of the new Parliament, thus depriving the places they represented of their right of choosing representatives, but they were to constitute a Committee of Revision, and in this capacity to determine the validity of each election and the fitness of the members returned.

A conference took place between the leaders of the Commons and the Officers of the army, who resolutely demanded not only the omission of these clauses, but that the Parliament should at once dissolve itself, and commit the new elections to a Council of State. "Our charge," retorted Haselrig, "cannot be transferred to any one." The conference was adjourned till the next morning, on an understanding that no decisive step should be taken; but it had no sooner re-assembled on the twentieth of April than the absence of the leading members confirmed the news that Vane was fast pressing the bill for a new Representative through the House. "It is contrary to common honesty," Cromwell angrily broke out; and, quitting Whitehall, he summoned a company of musketeers to follow him as far as the door of the Commons. He sat down quietly in his place, "clad in plain grey clothes and grey worsted stockings," and listened to Vane's passionate arguments. "I am come to do what grieves me to the heart," he said to his neighbour, St. John; but he still remained quiet, till Vane pressed the House to

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CHAP. XI. waive its usual forms and pass the bill at once. "The time has come," he said to Harrison. "Think well," replied Harrison, "it is a dangerous work!" and Cromwell listened for another quarter of an hour. At the question "that this bill do pass," he at length rose, and his tone grew higher as he repeated his former charges of injustice, self-interest, and delay. "Your hour is come," he ended, "the Lord hath done with you!" A crowd of members started to their feet in angry protest. "Come, come," replied Cromwell, "we have had enough of this;" and striding into the midst of the chamber, he clapt his hat on his head, and exclaimed, "I will put an end to your prating!" In the din that followed his voice was heard in broken sentences—"it is not fit that you should sit here any longer! You should give place to better men! You are no Parliament." Thirty musketeers entered at a sign from their General, and the fifty members present crowded to the door. "Drunkard!" Cromwell broke out as Wentworth passed him; and Martin was taunted with a yet coarser name. Vane, fearless to the last, told him his act was "against all right and all honour." "Ah, Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane," Cromwell retorted in bitter indignation at the trick he had been played, "you might have prevented all this, but you are a juggler, and have no common honesty! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" The Speaker refused to quit his seat, till Harrison offered to "lend him a hand to come down." Cromwell lifted the mace from the table. "What shall we do with this bauble?" he said. "Take it away!" The door of the House was locked at last, and the dispersion of the Commons was followed a few hours after by that of their executive committee, the Council of State. Cromwell himself summoned them to withdraw. "We have heard," replied the President, John Bradshaw, "what you have done this morning at the House, and in some hours all England will hear it. But you mistake, sir, if you think the Parliament dissolved. No power on earth can dissolve the Parliament but itself, be sure of that!"

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CHAPTER XII.

THE PROTECTORATE.

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THE thin screen which the continuance of a little knot of representatives had thrown over the rule of the sword was at last torn away. So long as an assembly which called itself a House of Commons met at Westminster, men might still cling to a belief in the existence of a legal government. But now that even this was gone such a belief was no longer possible. The army itself had to recognize its own position. The dispersion of the Parliament and of the Council of State left England without a government, for the authority of every official ended with that of the body from which his power was derived; and Cromwell, as Captain-General, was forced to recognize his responsibility for the maintenance of public order. The one power left in England was the power of the sword. But, as in the revolution of 1648, so in the revolution of 1653, no thought of military despotism can be fairly traced in the acts of the general or the army. They were in fact far from regarding their position as a revolutionary one. Though incapable of justification on any formal ground, their proceedings since the establishment of the Commonwealth had as yet been substantially in vindication of the rights of the country to representation and self-government; and public opinion had gone fairly with the army in its demand for a full and efficient body of representatives, as well as in its resistance to the project by which the Rump would have deprived half England of its

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right of election. It was only when no other means existed of preventing such a wrong that the soldiers had driven out the wrongdoers. "It is you that have forced me to this," Cromwell exclaimed, as he drove the members from the House; "I have sought the Lord night and day that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work." If the act was one of violence to the little group who claimed to be a House of Commons, the act which it aimed at preventing was one of violence on their part to the constitutional rights of the whole nation. The people had in fact been "dissatisfied in every corner of the realm" at the state of public affairs: and the expulsion of the members was ratified by a general assent. "We did not hear a dog bark at their going," the Protector said years afterwards. Whatever anxiety may have been felt at the use which was like to be made of "the power of the sword," was in great part dispelled by a proclamation of the officers. They professed that their one anxiety was "not to grasp the power ourselves nor to keep it in military hands, no not for a day," and their promise to "call to the government men of approved fidelity and honesty" was to some extent redeemed by the nomination of a provisional Council of State, consisting of eight officers of high rank and four civilians, with Cromwell as their head, and a seat in which was offered, though fruitlessly, to Vane.

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Convention.

The first business of such a body was clearly to summon a new Parliament and to resign its trust into its hands. But the bill for Parliamentary reform had dropped with the expulsion of the Rump; and reluctant as the Council was to summon a new Parliament on the old basis of election, it shrank from the responsibility of effecting so fundamental a change as the creation of a new basis by its own authority. It was this difficulty which led to the expedient of a Constituent Convention. Cromwell told the story of this unlucky assembly some years after with an amusing frankness. "I will come and tell you a story of my own

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weakness and folly. And yet it was done in my simplicity—I dare avow it was. . . . It was thought then that men of our own judgement, who had fought in the wars, and were all of a piece on that account—why, surely, these men will hit it, and these men will do it to the purpose, whatever can be desired! And surely we did think, and I did think so—the more blame to me! Of the hundred and fifty-six men, "faithful, fearing God, and hating covetousness," whose names were selected for this purpose by the Council of State from lists furnished by the congregational churches, the bulk were men, like Ashley Cooper, of good blood and "free estates;" and the proportion of burgesses, such as the leather-merchant, Praise-God Barebones, whose name was eagerly seized on as a nickname for the body to which he belonged, seems to have been much the same as in earlier Parliaments. But the circumstances of their choice told fatally on the temper of its members. Cromwell himself, in the burst of rugged eloquence with which he welcomed their assembling on the fourth of July, was carried away by a strange enthusiasm. "Convince the nation," he said, "that as men fearing God have fought them out of their bondage under the regal power, so men fearing God do now rule them in the fear of God. . . . Own your call, for it is of God: indeed it is marvellous, and it hath been unprojected. . . . Never was a supreme power under such a way of owning God and being owned by Him." A spirit yet more enthusiastic appeared in the proceedings of the Convention itself.

The resignation of their powers by Cromwell and the Council into its hands left it the one supreme authority; but by the instrument which convoked it provision had been made that this authority should be transferred in fifteen months to another assembly elected according to its directions. Its work was, in fact, to be that of a constituent assembly, paving the way for a Parliament on a really national basis. But the Convention put the largest construction on its commission, and boldly undertook the

Its work.

CHAP. XII. whole task of constitutional reform. Committees were appointed to consider the needs of the Church and the nation. The spirit of economy and honesty which pervaded the assembly appeared in its redress of the extravagance which prevailed in the civil service, and of the inequality of taxation. With a remarkable energy it undertook a host of reforms, for whose execution England has had to wait to our own day. The Long Parliament had shrunk from any reform of the Court of Chancery, where twenty-three thousand cases were waiting unheard. The Convention proposed its abolition. The work of compiling a single code of laws, begun under the Long Parliament by a committee with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was again pushed forward. The frenzied alarm which these bold measures aroused among the lawyer class was soon backed by that of the clergy, who saw their wealth menaced by the establishment of civil marriage and by proposals to substitute the free contributions of congregations for the payment of tithes. The landed proprietors too rose against a scheme for the abolition of lay-patronage, which was favoured by the Convention, and predicted an age of confiscation. The "Barebones Parliament," as the assembly was styled in derision, was charged with a design to ruin property, the Church, and the law, with enmity to knowledge, and a blind and ignorant fanaticism.

*Close of
the
Convention.*

Cromwell himself shared the general uneasiness at its proceedings. His mind was that of an administrator rather than that of a statesman, unspeculative, deficient in foresight, conservative, and eminently practical. He saw the need of administrative reform in Church and State; but he had no sympathy whatever with the revolutionary theories which were filling the air around him. His desire was for "a settlement" which should be accompanied with as little disturbance of the old state of things as possible. If Monarchy had vanished in the turmoil of war, his experience of the Long Parliament

only confirmed him in his belief of the need of establishing an executive power of a similar kind, apart from the power of the legislature, as a condition of civil liberty. His sword had won "liberty of conscience;" but passionately as he clung to it, he was still for an established Church, for a parochial system, and a ministry maintained by tithes. His social tendencies were simply those of the class to which he belonged. "I was by birth a gentleman," he told a later Parliament, and in the old social arrangement of "a nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman," he saw "a good interest of the nation and a great one." He hated "that levelling principle" which tended to the reducing of all to one equality. "What was the purport of it," he asks with an amusing simplicity, "but to make the tenant as liberal a fortune as the landlord? Which, I think, if obtained, would not have lasted long. The men of that principle, after they had served their own turns, would then have cried up property and interest fast enough." To a practical temper such as this the speculative reforms of the Convention were as distasteful as to the lawyers and clergy whom they attacked. "Nothing," said Cromwell, "was in the hearts of these men but 'overturn, overturn.'" In December however he was delivered from his embarrassment by the internal dissensions of the Assembly itself. The day after the decision against tithes the more conservative members snatched a vote by surprise "that the sitting of this Parliament any longer, as now constituted, will not be for the good of the Commonwealth, and that it is requisite to deliver up unto the Lord-General the powers we received from him." The Speaker placed their abdication in Cromwell's hands, and the act was confirmed by the subsequent adhesion of a majority of the members.

The dissolution of the Convention replaced matters in the state in which its assembly had found them; but there was still the same general anxiety to substitute some sort of legal rule for the power of the sword. The Convention had named during its session a fresh Council of State, and

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*The
Instrument
of
Government.*

CHAP. XII. this body at once drew up, under the name of the Instrument of Government, a remarkable Constitution which was adopted by the Council of Officers. They were now driven by necessity to the step from which they had shrunk, that of convening a Parliament on the reformed basis of representation, though such a basis had no legal sanction. The House was to consist of four hundred members from England, thirty from Scotland, and thirty from Ireland. The seats hitherto assigned to small and rotten boroughs were transferred to larger constituencies, and for the most part to counties. All special rights of voting in the election of members were abolished, and replaced by a general right of suffrage, based on the possession of real or personal property to the value of two hundred pounds. Catholics and "Malignants," as those who had fought for the King were called, were excluded for the while from the franchise. Constitutionally all further organization of the form of government should have been left to this Assembly; but the dread of disorder during the interval of its election, as well as a longing for "settlement," drove the Council to complete their work by pressing the office of "Protector" upon Cromwell. "They told me," he pleaded afterwards, "that except I would undertake the government they thought things would hardly come to a composure or settlement, but blood and confusion would break in as before." If we follow however his own statement, it was when they urged that the acceptance of such a Protectorate actually limited his power as Lord-General, and "bound his hands to act nothing without the consent of a Council until the Parliament," that the post was accepted. The powers of the new Protector indeed were strictly limited. Though the members of the Council were originally named by him, each member was irremovable save by consent of the rest: their advice was necessary in all foreign affairs, their consent in matters of peace and war, their approval in nominations to the great offices of state, or the disposal

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of the military or civil power. With this body too lay the choice of all future Protectors. To the administrative check of the Council was added the political check of the Parliament. Three years at the most were to elapse between the assembling of one Parliament and another, and, once met, it could not be prorogued or dissolved for five months. Laws could not be made, nor taxes imposed but by its authority, and after the lapse of twenty days the statutes it passed became laws, even though the Protector's assent was refused to them. The new Constitution was undoubtedly popular; and the promise of a real Parliament in a few months covered the want of any legal character in the new rule. The Government was generally accepted as a provisional one, which could only acquire legal authority from the ratification of its acts in the coming session; and the desire to settle it on such a Parliamentary basis was universal among the members of the new Assembly which met in September 1654 at Westminster.

Few Parliaments have ever been more memorable, or more truly representative of the English people, than the Parliament of 1654. It was the first Parliament in our history where members from Scotland and Ireland sat side by side with those from England, as they sit in the Parliament of to-day. The members for rotten boroughs and pocket-boroughs had disappeared. In spite of the exclusion of royalists and Catholics from the polling-booths, and the arbitrary erasure of the names of a few ultra-republican members by the Council, the House had a better title to the name of a "free Parliament" than any which had sat before. The freedom with which the electors had exercised their right of voting was seen indeed in the large number of Presbyterian members who were returned, and in the reappearance of Haselrig and Bradshaw, with many members of the Long Parliament, side by side with Lord Herbert and the older Sir Harry Vane. The first business of the House was clearly to consider the question of government; and Haselrig, with the fiercer republicans, at once denied

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the legal existence of either Council or Protector, on the ground that the Long Parliament had never been dissolved. Such an argument however told as much against the Parliament in which they sat as against the administration itself, and the bulk of the Assembly contented themselves with declining to recognize the Constitution or Protectorate as of more than provisional validity. They proceeded at once to settle the government on a Parliamentary basis. The "Instrument" was taken as the groundwork of the new Constitution, and carried clause by clause. That Cromwell should retain his rule as Protector was unanimously agreed; that he should possess the right of veto or a co-ordinate legislative power with the Parliament was hotly debated, though the violent language of Haselrig did little to disturb the general tone of moderation. Suddenly however Cromwell interposed. If he had undertaken the duties of Protector with reluctance, he looked on all legal defects in his title as more than supplied by the general acceptance of the nation. "I called not myself to this place," he urged, "God and the people of these kingdoms have borne testimony to it." His rule had been accepted by London, by the army, by the solemn decision of the judges, by addresses from every shire, by the very appearance of the members of the Parliament in answer to his writ. "Why may I not balance this Providence," he asked, "with any hereditary interest?" In this national approval he saw a call from God, a Divine Right of a higher order than that of the kings who had gone before.

Cromwell's
adminis-
tration.

But there was another ground for the anxiety with which Cromwell watched the proceedings of the Commons. His passion for administration had far overstepped the bounds of a merely provisional rule in the interval before the assembling of the Parliament. His desire for "settlement" had been strengthened not only by the drift of public opinion, but by the urgent need of every day; and the power reserved by the "Instrument" to issue temporary Ordinances. "until further order in such matters, to be taken by the

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Parliament," gave a scope to his marvellous activity of which he at once took advantage. Sixty-four Ordinances had been issued in the nine months before the meeting of the Parliament. Peace had been concluded with Holland. The Church had been set in order. The law itself had been minutely regulated. The union with Scotland had been brought to completion. So far was Cromwell from dreaming that these measures, or the authority which enacted them, would be questioned, that he looked to Parliament simply to complete his work. "The great end of your meeting," he said at the first assembly of its members, "is healing and settling." Though he had himself done much, he added, "there was still much to be done." Peace had to be made with Portugal, and alliance with Spain. Bills were laid before the House for the codification of the law. The plantation and settlement of Ireland had still to be completed. He resented the setting these projects aside for constitutional questions which, as he held, a Divine call had decided, and he resented yet more the renewed claim advanced by Parliament to the sole power of legislation. As we have seen, his experience of the evils which had arisen from the concentration of legislative and executive power in the Long Parliament had convinced Cromwell of the danger to public liberty which lay in such a union. He saw in the joint government of "a single person and a Parliament" the only assurance "that Parliaments should not make themselves perpetual," or that their power should not be perverted to public wrong.

But whatever strength there may have been in the Protector's arguments, the act by which he proceeded to enforce them was fatal to liberty, and in the end to Puritanism. "If my calling be from God," he ended, "and my testimony from the People, God and the People shall take it from me, else I will not part from it." And he announced that no member would be suffered to enter the House without signing an engagement "not to alter the

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Government as it is settled in a single person and a Parliament." No act of the Stuarts had been a bolder defiance of constitutional law; and the act was as needless as it was illegal. One hundred members alone refused to take the engagement, and the signatures of three-fourths of the House proved that the security Cromwell desired might have been easily procured by a vote of Parliament. But those who remained resumed their constitutional task with unbroken firmness. They quietly asserted their sole title to government by referring the Protector's Ordinances to Committees for revision, and for conversion into laws. The "Instrument of Government" was turned into a bill, debated, and after some serious modifications read a third time. Money votes, as in previous Parliaments, were deferred till "grievances" had been settled. But Cromwell once more intervened. The royalists were astir again; and he attributed their renewed hopes to the hostile attitude which he ascribed to the Parliament. The army, which remained unpaid while the supplies were delayed, was seething with discontent. "It looks," said the Protector, "as if the laying grounds for a quarrel had rather been designed than to give the people settlement. Judge yourselves whether the contesting of things that were provided for by this government hath been profitable expense of time for the good of this nation." In January, 1655, with words of angry reproach he declared the Parliament dissolved.

The
Major-
Generals.

The dissolution of the Parliament of 1654 was a turning point in the relations of England and the army. As yet neither the people nor the soldiers had fairly recognized the actual state of affairs. From the revolution of 1648 the sword had been supreme, but its supremacy had been disguised by the continuance of the Rump. When the Rump was expelled, the military rule which followed still seemed only provisional. The bulk of Englishmen and the bulk of the army itself looked on its attitude as simply imposed on it by necessity, and believed that with the assembly of a

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Parliament all would return to a legal course. But the Parliament had come and gone; and the army still refused to lay down the sword. On the contrary, it seemed at last to resolve to grasp frankly the power which it had so long shrunk from openly wielding. All show of constitutional rule was now at an end. The Protectorate, deprived by its own act of all chance of legal sanction, became a simple tyranny. Cromwell professed indeed to be restrained by the "Instrument;" but the one great restraint on his power which the Instrument provided, the inability to levy taxes save by consent of Parliament, was set aside on the plea of necessity. "The People," said the Protector in words which Strafford might have uttered, "will prefer their real security to forms." That a danger of royalist revolt existed was undeniable, but the danger was at once doubled by the general discontent. From this moment, Whitelock tells us, "many sober and noble patriots," in despair of public liberty, "did begin to incline to the King's restoration." In the mass of the population the reaction was far more rapid. "Charles Stuart," writes a Cheshire correspondent to the Secretary of State, "hath five hundred friends in these adjacent counties for every one friend to you among them." But before the overpowering strength of the army even this general discontent was powerless. Yorkshire, where the royalist insurrection was expected to be most formidable, never ventured to rise at all. There were risings in Devon, Dorset, and the Welsh Marches, but they were quickly put down, and their leaders brought to the scaffold. Easily however as the revolt was suppressed, the terror of the Government was seen in the energetic measures to which Cromwell resorted in the hope of securing order. The country was divided into ten military governments, each with a major-general at its head, who was empowered to disarm all papists and royalists, and to arrest suspected persons. Funds for the support of this military despotism were provided by an Ordinance of the Council of State, which

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enacted that all who had at any time borne arms for the King should pay every year a tenth part of their income, in spite of the Act of Oblivion, as a fine for their royalist tendencies. The despotism of the major-generals was seconded by the older expedients of tyranny. The ejected clergy had been zealous in promoting the insurrection, and they were forbidden in revenge to act as chaplains or as tutors. The press was placed under a strict censorship. The payment of taxes levied by the sole authority of the Protector was enforced by distraint; and when a collector was sued in the courts for redress, the counsel for the prosecution were sent to the Tower.

If pardon indeed could ever be won for a tyranny, the wisdom and grandeur with which he used the power he had usurped would win pardon for the Protector. The greatest among the many great enterprises undertaken by the Long Parliament had been the union of the three Kingdoms: and that of Scotland with England had been brought about, at the very end of its career, by the tact and vigour of Sir Harry Vane. But its practical realization was left to Cromwell. In four months of hard fighting General Monk brought the Highlands to a new tranquillity; and the presence of an army of eight thousand men, backed by a line of forts, kept the most restless of the clans in good order. The settlement of the country was brought about by the temperance and sagacity of Monk's successor, General Deane. No further interference with the Presbyterian system was attempted beyond the suppression of the General Assembly. But religious liberty was resolutely protected, and Deane ventured even to interfere on behalf of the miserable victims whom Scotch bigotry was torturing and burning on the charge of witchcraft. Even steady royalists acknowledged the justice of the Government and the wonderful discipline of its troops. "We always reckon those eight years of the usurpation," said Burnet afterwards, "a time of great peace and prosperity."

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Settlement
of
Ireland.

Sterner work had to be done before Ireland could be brought into real union with its sister kingdoms. The work of conquest had been continued by Ireton, and completed after his death by General Ludlow, as mercilessly as it had begun. Thousands perished by famine or the sword. Shipload after shipload of those who surrendered were sent over sea for sale into forced labour in Jamaica and the West Indies. More than forty thousand of the beaten Catholics were permitted to enlist for foreign service, and found a refuge in exile under the banners of France and Spain. The work of settlement, which was undertaken by Henry Cromwell, the younger and abler of the Protector's sons, turned out to be even more terrible than the work of the sword. It took as its model the Colonization of Ulster, the fatal measure which had destroyed all hope of a united Ireland, and had brought inevitably in its train the revolt and the war. The people were divided into classes in the order of their assumed guilt. All who after fair trial were proved to have personally taken part in the massacre were sentenced to banishment or death. The general amnesty which freed "those of the meaner sort" from all question on other scores was far from extending to the landowners. Catholic proprietors who had shown no goodwill to the Parliament, even though they had taken no part in the war, were punished by the forfeiture of a third of their estates. All who had borne arms were held to have forfeited the whole, and driven into Connaught, where fresh estates were carved out for them from the lands of the native clans. No such doom had ever fallen on a nation in modern times as fell upon Ireland in its new settlement. Among the bitter memories which part Ireland from England the memory of the bloodshed and confiscation which the Puritans wrought remains the bitterest; and the worst curse an Irish peasant can hurl at his enemy is "the curse of Cromwell." But pitiless as the Protector's policy was, it was successful in the ends at which it aimed. The whole native population lay

CHAP. XII. helpless and crushed. Peace and order were restored, and a large incoming of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland brought a new prosperity to the wasted country. Above all, the legislative union which had been brought about with Scotland was now carried out with Ireland, and thirty seats were allotted to its representatives in the general Parliament.

*Settlement
of
England.*

In England Cromwell dealt with the royalists as irreconcilable enemies; but in every other respect he carried fairly out his pledge of "healing and settling." The series of administrative reforms planned by the Convention had been partially carried into effect before the meeting of Parliament in 1654; but the work was pushed on after the dissolution of the House with yet greater energy. Nearly a hundred ordinances showed the industry of the Government. Police, public amusements, roads, finances, the condition of prisons, the imprisonment of debtors, were a few among the subjects which claimed Cromwell's attention. An ordinance of more than fifty clauses reformed the Court of Chancery. The anarchy which had reigned in the Church since the breakdown of Episcopacy and the failure of the Presbyterian system to supply its place, was put an end to by a series of wise and temperate measures for its reorganization. Rights of patronage were left untouched; but a Board of Triers, a fourth of whom were laymen, was appointed to examine the fitness of ministers presented to livings; and a Church board of gentry and clergy was set up in every county to exercise a supervision over ecclesiastical affairs, and to detect and remove scandalous and ineffectual ministers. Even by the confession of Cromwell's opponents the plan worked well. It furnished the country with "able, serious preachers," Baxter tells us, "who lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were;" and, as both Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers were presented to livings at the will of their patrons, it solved so far as practical working was concerned the problem of a religious union among

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Protestants on the base of a wide variety of Christian opinion. From the Church which was thus reorganized all power of interference with faiths differing from its own was resolutely withheld. Save in his dealings with the Episcopalians, whom he looked on as a political danger, Cromwell remained true throughout to the cause of religious liberty. Even the Quaker, rejected by all other Christian bodies as an anarchist and blasphemer, found sympathy and protection in the Protector. The Jews had been excluded from England since the reign of Edward the First; and a prayer which they now presented for leave to return was refused by a commission of merchants and divines to whom the Protector referred it for consideration. But the refusal was quietly passed over, and the connivance of Cromwell in the settlement of a few Hebrews in London and Oxford was so clearly understood that no one ventured to interfere with them.

No part of his policy is more characteristic of Cromwell's mind, whether in its strength or in its weakness, than his management of foreign affairs. While England had been absorbed in her long and obstinate struggle for freedom the whole face of the world around her had changed. The Thirty Years' War was over. The victories of Gustavus, and of the Swedish generals who followed him, had been seconded by the policy of Richelieu and the intervention of France. Protestantism in Germany was no longer in peril from the bigotry or ambition of the House of Austria; and the Treaty of Westphalia had drawn a permanent line between the territories belonging to the adherents of the old religion and the new. There was little danger indeed now to Europe from the great Catholic House which had threatened its freedom ever since Charles the Fifth. Its Austrian branch was called away from dreams of aggression in the west to a desperate struggle with the Turk for the possession of Hungary and the security of Austria itself. Spain, from causes which it is no part of our present story to detail, was falling into a state of strange decrepi-

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tude. So far from aiming to be mistress of Europe, she was rapidly sinking into the almost helpless prey of France. It was France which had now become the dominant power in Christendom, though her position was far from being as commanding as it was to become under Lewis the Fourteenth. The peace and order which prevailed after the cessation of the religious troubles throughout her compact and fertile territory gave scope at last to the quick and industrious temper of the French people; while her wealth and energy was placed by the centralizing administration of Henry the Fourth, of Richelieu, and of Mazarin, almost absolutely in the hands of the Crown. Under the three great rulers who have just been named her ambition was steadily directed to the same purpose of territorial aggrandizement, and though limited as yet to the annexation of the Spanish and Imperial territories which still parted her frontier from the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine, a statesman of wise political genius would have discerned the beginning of that great struggle for supremacy over Europe at large which was only foiled by the genius of Marlborough and the victories of the Grand Alliance.

Cromwell and Spain.

But in his view of European politics Cromwell was misled by the conservative and unspeculative temper of his mind as well as by the strength of his religious enthusiasm. Of the change in the world around him he seems to have discerned nothing. He brought to the Europe of Mazarin the hopes and ideas with which all England was thrilling in his youth at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Spain was still to him "the head of the Papal Interest," whether at home or abroad. "The Papists in England" he said to the Parliament of 1656, "have been accounted, ever since I was born, Spaniolized; they never regarded France, or any other Papist state, but Spain only." The old English hatred of Spain, the old English resentment at the shameful part which the nation had been forced to play in the great German struggle by the policy of James and of Charles, lived on in Cromwell, and was only strengthened

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by the religious enthusiasm which the success of Puritanism had kindled within him. "The Lord Himself," he wrote to his admirals as they sailed to the West Indies, "hath a controversy with your enemies; even with that Romish Babylon of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper. In that respect we fight the Lord's battles." What Sweden had been under Gustavus, England, Cromwell dreamed, might be now—the head of a great Protestant League in the struggle against Catholic aggression. "You have on your shoulders," he said to the Parliament of 1654, "the interest of all the Christian people of the world. I wish it may be written on our hearts to be zealous for that interest." The first step in such a struggle would necessarily be to league the Protestant powers together, and Cromwell's earliest efforts were directed to bring the ruinous and indecisive quarrel with Holland to an end. The fierceness of the strife had grown with each engagement; but the hopes of Holland fell with her admiral, Tromp, who received a mortal wound at a moment when he had succeeded in forcing the English line; and the skill and energy of his successor, De Ruyter, struggled in vain to restore her waning fortunes. She was saved by the expulsion of the Long Parliament, which had persisted in its demand for a political union of the two countries; and the new policy of Cromwell was seen in the conclusion of peace. The peace indeed was dearly bought. Not only did the United Provinces recognize the supremacy of the English flag in the British seas, and submit to the Navigation Act, but that of Holland pledged itself to shut out the House of Orange from power, and thus relieved England from the risk of seeing a Stuart restoration supported by Dutch forces.

The peace which was concluded with the Dutch in 1654 was followed by the conclusion of like treaties with Sweden and with Denmark; and on the arrival of a Swedish envoy with offers of a league of friendship Cromwell endeavoured to bring the Dutch, the Brandenburgers, and the Danes into

War with Spain.

CHAP. XII. a confederation of the Protestant powers. His efforts in this direction however, though they never wholly ceased, remained fruitless; but the Protector was resolute to carry out his plans single-handed. The defeat of the Dutch had left England the chief sea-power of the world; and in the first days of 1655, before the dissolution of the Parliament, two fleets put to sea with secret instructions. The first, under Blake, appeared in the Mediterranean, exacted reparation from Tuscany for wrongs done to English commerce, bombarded Algiers, and destroyed the fleet with which its pirates had ventured through the reign of Charles to insult the English coast. The thunder of Blake's guns, every Puritan believed, would be heard in the castle of St. Angelo, and Rome itself would have to bow to the greatness of Cromwell. But though no declaration of war had been issued against Spain, the true aim of both expeditions was an attack on that power; and the attack proved singularly unsuccessful. Though Blake sailed to the Spanish coast, he failed to intercept the treasure fleet from America; and the second expedition, which made its way to the West Indies, was foiled in a descent on St. Domingo. It conquered Jamaica in May; but the conquest of this lesser island, important as it really was in breaking through the monopoly of the New World in the South which Spain had till now enjoyed, seemed at the time but a poor result for the vast expenditure of money and blood. The leaders of the expedition, Blake and Venables, were committed to the Tower on their return in September; but Cromwell found himself at war with Spain, and thrown whether he would or no into the hands of Mazarin.

Parliament of 1655. In October, 1655, he was forced to sign a treaty of alliance with France; while the cost of his abortive expeditions drove him again to face a Parliament. But Cromwell no longer trusted, as in his earlier Parliament, to freedom of election. The sixty members who were returned under the Ordinances of union by Scotland and

Ireland were simply nominees of the Government. Its whole influence was exerted to secure the return of the more conspicuous members of the Council of State. It was calculated that of the members returned one-half were bound to the Government by ties of profit or place. But Cromwell was still unsatisfied. A certificate of the Council was required from each member before admission to the House when it met in September, 1656; and a fourth of the whole number returned—one hundred in all, with Haselrig at their head—were by this means excluded on grounds of disaffection or want of religion. To these arbitrary acts of violence the House replied only by a course of singular moderation and wisdom. From the first it disclaimed any purpose of opposing the Government. One of its earliest acts provided securities for Cromwell's person, which was threatened by constant plots of assassination. It supported him in his war policy, and voted supplies of unprecedented extent for the maintenance of the struggle. It was this attitude of loyalty which gave force to its steady refusal to sanction the system of tyranny which had practically placed England under martial law. In his opening address Cromwell boldly took his stand in support of the military despotism wielded by the major-generals. "It hath been more effectual towards the discountenancing of vice and settling religion than anything done these fifty years. I will abide by it," he said, with singular vehemence, "notwithstanding the envy and slander of foolish men. I could as soon venture my life with it as with anything I ever undertook. If it were to be done again, I would do it." But no sooner had a bill been introduced into Parliament to confirm the proceedings of the major-generals than a long debate showed the temper of the Commons. They had resolved to acquiesce in the Protectorate, but they were equally resolved to bring it again to a legal mode of government. This indeed was the aim of even Cromwell's wiser adherents. "What makes me fear the passing of this Act,"

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one of them wrote to his son Henry, "is that thereby his Highness' government will be more founded in force, and more removed from that natural foundation which the people in Parliament are desirous to give him, supposing that he will become more theirs than now he is." The bill was rejected, and Cromwell bowed to the feeling of the nation by withdrawing the powers of the major-generals.

But the defeat of the tyranny of the sword was only a step towards a far bolder effort for the restoration of the power of the law. It was no mere pedantry, still less was it vulgar flattery, which influenced the Parliament in their offer to Cromwell of the title of King. The experience of the last few years had taught the nation the value of the traditional forms under which its liberties had grown up. A king was limited by constitutional precedents. "The king's prerogative," it was well urged, "is under the courts of justice, and is bounded as well as any acre of land, or anything a man hath." A Protector, on the other hand, was new in our history, and there were no traditional means of limiting his power. "The one office being lawful in its nature," said Glynne, "known to the nation, certain in itself, and confined and regulated by the law, and the other not so—that was the great ground why the Parliament did so much insist on this office and title." Under the name of Monarchy, indeed, the question really at issue between the party headed by the officers and the party led by the lawyers in the Commons was that of the restoration of constitutional and legal rule. In March, 1657, the proposal was carried by an overwhelming majority, but a month passed in endless consultations between the Parliament and the Protector. His good sense, his knowledge of the general feeling of the nation, his real desire to obtain a settlement which should secure the ends for which Puritanism fought, political and religious liberty, broke, in conference after conference, through a mist of words. But his real concern throughout was with the temper of the army. Under whatever spurious disguises he cloaked

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the true nature of his government from the world, Cromwell knew well that it was a sheer government of the sword, that he was without hold upon the nation, and that the discontent of his soldiery would at once shake the fabric of his power. He vibrated to and fro between his sense of the political advantages of such a settlement, and his sense of its impossibility in face of the mood of the army. His soldiers, he said, were no common swordsmen. They were "godly men, men that will not be beaten down by a worldly and carnal spirit while they keep their integrity;" men in whose general voice he recognized the voice of God. "They are honest and faithful men," he urged, "true to the great things of the Government. And though it really is no part of their goodness to be unwilling to submit to what a Parliament shall settle over them, yet it is my duty and conscience to beg of you that there may be no hard things put upon them which they cannot swallow. I cannot think God would bless an undertaking of anything which would justly and with cause grieve them."

The temper of the army was soon shown. Its leaders, with Lambert, Fleetwood, and Desborough at their head, placed their commands in Cromwell's hands. A petition from the officers to Parliament demanded the withdrawal of the proposal to restore the Monarchy, "in the name of the old cause for which they had bled;" and on the eighth of May Cromwell anticipated the coming debate on this petition, a debate which might have led to an open breach between the army and the Commons, by a refusal of the crown. "I cannot undertake this Government," he said, "with that title of King; and that is my answer to this great and weighty business." Disappointed as it was, the Parliament with singular self-restraint turned to other modes of bringing about its purpose. The offer of the crown had been coupled with the condition of accepting a constitution, which was a modification of the Instrument of Government adopted by the Parliament of 1654,

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and this Constitution Cromwell emphatically approved. "The things provided by this Act of Government," he owned, "do secure the liberties of the people of God as they never before have had them." With a change of the title of King into that of Protector, the Act of Government now became law: and the solemn inauguration of the Protector by the Parliament on the twenty-sixth of June was a practical acknowledgement on the part of Cromwell of the illegality of his former rule. In the name of the Commons the Speaker invested him with a mantle of State, placed the sceptre in his hand, and girt the sword of justice by his side. By the new Act of Government Cromwell was allowed to name his own successor, but in all after cases the office was to be an elective one. In every other respect the forms of the older Constitution were carefully restored. Parliament was again to consist of two Houses, the seventy members of "the other House" being named by the Protector. The Commons regained their old right of exclusively deciding on the qualification of their members. Parliamentary restrictions were imposed on the choice of members of the Council, and officers of State or of the army. A fixed revenue was voted to the Protector, and it was provided that no moneys should be raised but by assent of Parliament. Liberty of worship was secured for all but Papists, Prelatists, Socinians, or those who denied the inspiration of the Scriptures; and liberty of conscience was secured for all.

Cromwell's triumphs.

The adjournment of the House after his inauguration in the summer of 1657, left Cromwell at the height of his power. He seemed at last to have placed his government on a legal and national basis. The ill-success of his earlier operations abroad was forgotten in a blaze of glory. On the eve of the Parliament's assembly one of Blake's captains had managed to intercept a part of the Spanish treasure fleet. At the close of 1656 the Protector seemed to have found the means of realizing his schemes for rekindling

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the religious war throughout Europe in a quarrel between the Duke of Savoy and his Protestant subjects in the valleys of Piedmont. A ruthless massacre of these Vaudois by the Duke's troops roused deep resentment throughout England, a resentment which still breathes in the noblest of Milton's sonnets. While the poet called on God to avenge his "slaughtered saints, whose bones lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold," Cromwell was already busy with the work of earthly vengeance. An English envoy appeared at the Duke's court with haughty demands of redress. Their refusal would have been followed by instant war, for the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland were bribed into promising a force of ten thousand men for an attack on Savoy. The plan was foiled by the cool diplomacy of Mazarin, who forced the Duke to grant Cromwell's demands; but the apparent success of the Protector raised his reputation at home and abroad. The spring of 1657 saw the greatest as it was the last of the triumphs of Blake. He found the Spanish Plate fleet guarded by galleons in the strongly-armed harbour of Santa Cruz; and on the twentieth of April he forced an entrance into the harbour and burnt or sank every ship within it. Triumphs at sea were followed by a triumph on land. Cromwell's demand of Dunkirk, which had long stood in the way of any acceptance of his offers of aid, was at last conceded; and in May, 1657, a detachment of the Puritan army joined the French troops who were attacking Flanders under the command of Turenne. Their valour and discipline were shown by the part they took in the capture of Mardyke in the summer of that year; and still more in the June of 1658 by the victory of the Dunes, a victory which forced the Flemish towns to open their gates to the French, and gave Dunkirk to Cromwell.

Never had the fame of an English ruler stood higher; but in the midst of his glory the hand of death was falling on the Protector. He had long been weary of his task. "God knows," he had burst out to the Parliament

Cromwell's theory.

CHAP. XII. a year before, "God knows I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, and to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertaken this government." Amidst the glory of his aims, Cromwell's heart was heavy with this sense of failure. Whatever dreams of personal ambition had mingled with his aim, his aim had in the main been a high and unselfish one; in the course that seems to modern eyes so strange and complex he had seen the leading of a divine hand that drew him from the sheep-folds to mould England into a people of God. What convinced him that the nation was called by a divine calling was the wonder which men felt at every step in its advance. The England which he saw around him was not an England which Pym or Hampden had foreseen, which Vane in his wildest dreams had imagined, or for which the boldest among the soldiers of the New Model had fought. Step by step the nation had been drawn to changes from whence it shrank, to principles which it held in horror. When the struggle began the temper of the men who waged it was a strictly conservative temper; they held themselves to be withstanding the revolutionary changes of the King, to be vindicating the existing constitution both of Church and State. But the strife had hardly opened when they were drawn by very need to a revolutionary platform. What men found themselves fighting for at Edgehill and Marston Moor was the substitution of government by the will of the nation for government by the will of the King, and a setting aside of the religious compromise embodied in the Church of the Tudors for a Church which was the mere embodiment of the Puritan section of the people at large. Defeat drove England to the New Model; and again it found itself drawn to a new advance. No sooner was the sword in the hand of the "Godly," than the conception of religious purity widened into that of religious liberty, and the thought of a nation self-governed into the dream of a kingdom of God. Dunbar and Worcester, the strife with the Houses, the final

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strife with the King, turned the dream into a practical policy. Every obstacle fell before it. Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church alike passed away. The loyalty of the nation, the stubborn efforts of Cromwell and Ireton, failed to uphold the Monarchy. Lords and Commons fell in the very moment of their victory over the King. Desperately as men clung to the last shadow of a Parliament, the victories of Blake, the statesmanship of Vane, failed to preserve the life of the Rump. In the crash of every political and religious institution the army found itself the one power in the land, and the dream of its soldiers grew into a will to set up on earth a Commonwealth of the Saints.

In this resolve Cromwell was at one with the New Model. Like every soldier in his army, he held that by the victories God had given them He had "so called them to look after the government of the land, and so entrusted them with the welfare of all His people, that they were responsible for it, and might not in conscience stand still while anything was done which they thought was against the interest of the people of God." But he never doubted that the nation would own its calling as zealously as his soldiers did. He had no wish to change the outer form of its political or its social life; he would maintain social distinctions as he would maintain Parliaments. But the old institutions must be penetrated with a new spirit. Conscience and worship must be free. Holiness must be the law of England's life. Its rulers must be found among "godly men," and their rule must be widened beyond the common sphere of temporal government. The old distinctions of the secular and the spiritual world must be done away. In public and in private life the new government must enforce obedience to the will of God. Socially such a theory seemed realized at last in the administration of the major-generals. Never had Cromwell been so satisfied. The "malignants" who had so long trodden pious men under foot lay helpless at the feet of the godly. The "Cavalier interest," which was but

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"the badge and character of countenancing profaneness, disorder, and wickedness in all places," was crushed and powerless. "Christian men" reigned supreme. Cromwell recalled how "it was a shame to be a Christian within these fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years in this nation. It was a shame, it was a reproach to a man; and the badge of Puritan was put upon it!" But the shame and reproach were now rolled away. The Puritan was master in the land. All government was in the hands of godly men. Piety was as needful for an officer in the army, for a magistrate, for a petty constable, as for a minister of religion. The aim of the Protector was that England should be ruled and administered by "the best," by men ruling and administering in the fear of God. In Church as in State all that such men had longed to do could now be done. Superstitious usages were driven from the churches. No minister wore a surplice. No child was signed in baptism with a cross. The very pastimes of the world had to conform themselves to the law of God. The theatres were closed. Sunday sports were summarily abolished. There were no more races, no more bull-baitings, no more cock-fighting, no more dances under the May-pole. Christmas had to pass without its junketings, or mummers, or mince-pies.

Its failure.

To the eyes of mere zealots the work of Puritanism seemed done. But Cromwell was no mere zealot. Strangely mingled with the enthusiasm of his temper was a cool, passionless faculty of seeing things as they actually were about him; and he saw that in its very hour of triumph the cause he loved was losing ground. From this effort to turn England into a kingdom of God, England itself stood aloof. Its traditional instincts were outraged by the wreck of its institutions, its good sense by the effort to enforce godliness by civil penalties, its self-respect by the rule of the sword. Never had England shown a truer nobleness than when it refused to be tempted from the path of freedom even by the genius of Cromwell, never a truer wisdom than when it refused to be lured from its tradition of prac-

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tical politics by the dazzling seductions of the Puritan ideal. And not only did the nation stand aloof from Cromwell's work, but its opposition grew hourly stronger. The very forces which seemed to have been annihilated by the Civil War drew a fresh life from the national ill-will to their conquerors. Men forgot the despotism of the Monarchy when the Monarchy and the Parliament lay wrecked in a common ruin. They forgot the tyranny of Laud when the Church was trampled under foot by men who trampled under foot the constitution. By a strange turn of fortune the restoration of the Church and of the Crown became identified with the restoration of legal government and with the overthrow of a rule of brute force. And for such a restoration the vast majority of the nation were longing more and more. The old enmities of party and sect were forgotten in the common enmity of every party and every sect to the tyranny of the sword. A new national unity was revealing itself, as one jarring element after another came in to swell the mass of the national opposition to the system of the Protectorate. The moderate royalist joined hands with the Cavalier, the steady Presbyterian came to join the moderate royalist, and their ranks were swelled at last by the very founders of the Commonwealth. Nothing marked more vividly the strength of the reaction against the Protector's system than the union in a common enmity of Vane and Haselrig with the partizans of the Stuart pretender.

It was the steady rise of this tide of opposition in which Cromwell saw the doom of his cause. That it could permanently be upheld by the sword he knew to be impossible. What he had hoped for was the gradual winning of England to a sense of its worth. But every day the current of opinion ran more strongly against it. The army stood alone in its purpose. Papist and sceptic, mystic and ceremonialist, latitudinarian and Presbyterian, all were hostile. The very pressure of Cromwell's system gave birth to new forms of spiritual and intellectual revolt. Science, rationalism, secularism, sprang for the first time into vivid life in their

The Scientific Movement.

CHAP. XII. protest against the forced concentration of human thought on the single topic of religion, the effort to prison religion itself in a system of dogma, and to narrow humanity with all its varied interests within the sphere of the merely spiritual. Nothing is more significant, though to Cromwell nothing would have been more unintelligible, than the simple story which tells us how from the vexed problems, political and religious, of the times, men turned to the peaceful study of the natural world about them. Bacon had already called men with a trumpet-voice to such studies; but in England at least Bacon stood before his age. The beginnings of physical science were more slow and timid there than in any country of Europe. Only two discoveries of any real value came from English research before the Restoration; the first, Gilbert's discovery of terrestrial magnetism in the close of Elizabeth's reign; the next, the great discovery of the circulation of the blood, which was taught by Harvey in the reign of James. Apart from these illustrious names England took little share in the scientific movement of the continent; and her whole energies seemed to be whirled into the vortex of theology and politics by the Civil War.

But the war had not reached its end when, in 1645, a little group of students were to be seen in London, men "inquisitive," says one of them, "into natural philosophy and other parts of human learning, and particularly of what had been called the New Philosophy . . . which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England." The strife of the time indeed aided in directing the minds of men to natural inquiries. "To have been always tossing about some theological question," says the first historian of the Royal Society, Bishop Sprat, "would have been to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they disliked in the public. To have been eternally musing on

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civil business and the distresses of the country was too melancholy a reflection. It was nature alone which could pleasantly entertain them in that estate." Foremost in the group stood Doctors Wallis and Wilkins, whose removal to Oxford, which had just been reorganized by the Puritan Visitors, divided the little company in 1648 into two societies, one at the university, the other remaining at the capital. The Oxford society, which was the more important of the two, held its meetings at the lodgings of Dr. Wilkins, who had become Warden of Wadham College; and added to the names of its members that of the eminent mathematician Dr. Ward, and that of the first of English economists, Sir William Petty. "Our business," Wallis tells us, "was (precluding matters of theology and State affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries and such as related thereunto, as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Statics, Magneticks, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments: with the state of these studies, as then cultivated at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the *venæ lacteæ*, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape of Saturn, the spots in the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes, the grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities, and Nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian experiment in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, and divers other things of like nature."

To what great results this protest against the Puritan concentration of all human thought on spiritual issues was to lead none could foresee. But results almost as great were to spring from the protest against the Puritan dogmatism which gave birth to the Latitudinarians. Whatever verdict history may pronounce on Falkland's political

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CHAP. XII. career, his name must remain memorable in the history of religious thought. A new era in English theology began with the speculations of the men he gathered round him in his country house at Great Tew in the years that preceded the meeting of the Long Parliament. Their work was above all to deny the authority of tradition in matters of faith, as Bacon had denied it in matters of physical research; and to assert in the one field as in the other the supremacy of reason as a test of truth. Of the authority of the Church, its Fathers, and its Councils, John Hales, a Canon of Windsor, and a friend of Laud, said briefly "it is none." He dismissed with contempt the accepted test of universality. "Universality is such a proof of truth as truth itself is ashamed of. The most singular and strongest part of human authority is properly in the wisest and the most virtuous, and these, I trow, are not the most universal." William Chillingworth, a man of larger if not keener mind, had been taught by an early conversion to Catholicism, and by a speedy return, the insecurity of any basis for belief but that of private judgement. In his "Religion of Protestants" he set aside ecclesiastical tradition or Church authority as grounds of faith in favour of the Bible, but only of the Bible as interpreted by the common reason of men. Jeremy Taylor, the most brilliant of English preachers, a sufferer like Chillingworth on the royalist side during the troubles, and who was rewarded at the Restoration with the bishopric of Down, limited even the authority of the Scriptures themselves. Reason was the one means which Taylor approved of in interpreting the Bible; but the certainty of the conclusions which reason drew from the Bible varied, as he held, with the conditions of reason itself. In all but the simplest truths of natural religion "we are not sure not to be deceived." The deduction of points of belief from the words of the Scriptures was attended with all the uncertainty and liability to error which sprang from the infinite variety of human understandings, the difficulties which hinder the discovery

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of truth, and the influences which divert the mind from accepting or rightly estimating it.

It was plain to a mind like Chillingworth's that this denial of authority, this perception of the imperfection of reason in the discovery of absolute truth, struck as directly at the root of Protestant dogmatism as at the root of Catholic infallibility. "If Protestants are faulty in this matter [of claiming authority] it is for doing it too much and not too little. This presumptuous imposing of the senses of man upon the words of God, of the special senses of man upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together under the equal penalty of death and damnation, this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God, this deifying our own interpretations and tyrannous enforcing them upon others, this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty wherein Christ and His apostles left them, is and hath been the only foundation of all the schisms of the Church, and that which makes them immortal." In his "Liberty of Prophecy" Jeremy Taylor pleaded the cause of toleration with a weight of argument which hardly required the triumph of the Independents and the shock of Naseby to drive it home. But the freedom of conscience which the Independent founded on the personal communion of each soul with God, the Latitudinarian founded on the weakness of authority and the imperfection of human reason. Taylor pleads even for the Anabaptist and the Romanist. He only gives place to the action of the civil magistrate in "those religions whose principles destroy government," and "those religions—if there be any such—which teach ill life." Hales openly professed that he would quit the Church to-morrow if it required him to believe that all that dissented from it must be damned. Chillingworth denounced persecution in words of fire. "Take away this persecution, burning, cursing, damning of men for not

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CHAP. XII. subscribing the words of men as the words of God; require
 The Pro- of Christians only to believe Christ and to call no man
 tectorate. master but Him; let them leave claiming infallibility that
 1653- have no title to it, and let them that in their own words
 1660. disclaim it, disclaim it also in their actions. . . . Protest-
 ants are inexcusable if they do offer violence to other men's
 consciences."

From the denunciation of intolerance the Latitudinarians passed easily to the dream of comprehension which had haunted every nobler soul since the "Utopia" of More. Hales based his loyalty to the Church of England on the fact that it was the largest and the most tolerant Church in Christendom. Chillingworth pointed out how many obstacles to comprehension were removed by such a simplification of belief as flowed from a rational theology, and asked, like More, for "such an ordering of the public service of God as that all who believe the Scripture and live according to it might without scruple or hypocrisy or protestation in any part join in it." Taylor, like Chillingworth, rested his hope of union on the simplification of belief. He saw a probability of error in all the creeds and confessions adopted by Christian Churches. "Such bodies of confessions and articles," he said, "must do much hurt." "He is rather the schismatic who makes unnecessary and inconvenient impositions, than he who disobeys them because he cannot do otherwise without violating his conscience." The Apostles' Creed in its literal meaning seemed to him the one term of Christian union which the Church had any right to impose.

Hobbes. The impulse which such men were giving to religious speculation was being given to political and social inquiry by a mind of far greater keenness and power. Bacon's favourite secretary was Thomas Hobbes. "He was beloved by his Lordship," Aubrey tells us, "who was wont to have him walk in his delicate groves, where he did meditate; and when a notion darted into his mind, Mr. Hobbes was presently to write it down. And his

CHAP. XII. Lordship was wont to say that he did it better than any
 The Pro- one else about him; for that many times when he read
 tectorate. their notes he scarce understood what they writ, because
 1653- they understood it not clearly themselves." The long life
 1660. of Hobbes covers a memorable space in our history. He was born in the year of the victory over the Armada; he died in 1679 at the age of ninety-two, only nine years before the Revolution. His ability soon made itself felt, and in his earlier days he was the secretary of Bacon, and the friend of Ben Jonson and Lord Herbert of Cheshire. But it was not till the age of fifty-four, when he withdrew to France on the eve of the great Rebellion in 1642, that his speculations were made known to the world in his treatise "De Cive." He joined the exiled Court at Paris, and became mathematical tutor to Charles the Second, whose love and regard for him seems to have been real to the end. But his post was soon forfeited by the appearance of his "Leviathan" in 1651; he was forbidden to approach the Court, and returned to England, where he appears to have acquiesced in the rule of Cromwell.

The Restoration brought Hobbes a pension; but both his works were condemned by Parliament, and "Hobbism" became, ere he died, a popular synonym for irreligion and immorality. Prejudice of this kind sounded oddly in the case of a writer who had laid down, as the two things necessary to salvation, faith in Christ and obedience to the law. But the prejudice sprang from a true sense of the effect which the Hobbist philosophy must necessarily have whether on the current religion or on the current notions of political and social morality. Hobbes was the first great English writer who dealt with the science of government from the ground, not of tradition, but of reason. It was in his treatment of man in the stage of human development which he supposed to precede that of society that he came most roughly into conflict with the accepted beliefs. Men, in his theory, were by nature equal, and their only natural relation was a state of war.

His
 political
 speculations.

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It was no innate virtue of man himself which created human society out of this chaos of warring strengths. Hobbes in fact denied the existence of the more spiritual sides of man's nature. His hard and narrow logic dissected every human custom and desire, and reduced even the most sacred to demonstrations of a prudent selfishness. Friendship was simply a sense of social utility to one another. The so-called laws of nature, such as gratitude or the love of our neighbour, were in fact contrary to the natural passions of man, and powerless to restrain them. Nor had religion rescued man by the interposition of a Divine will. Nothing better illustrates the daring with which the new scepticism was to break through the theological traditions of the older world than the pitiless logic with which Hobbes assailed the very theory of revelation. "To say God hath spoken to man in a dream, is no more than to say man dreamed that God hath spoken to him." "To say one hath seen a vision, or heard a voice, is to say he hath dreamed between sleeping and waking." Religion, in fact, was nothing more than "the fear of invisible powers;" and here, as in all other branches of human science, knowledge dealt with words and not with things.

It was man himself who for his own profit created society, by laying down certain of his natural rights and retaining only those of self-preservation. A Covenant between man and man originally created "that great Leviathan called the Commonwealth or State, which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended." The fiction of such an "original contract" has long been dismissed from political speculation, but its effect at the time of its first appearance was immense. Its almost universal acceptance put an end to the religious and patriarchal theories of society, on which Kingship had till now founded its claim of a Divine right to authority which no subject might question. But if Hobbes destroyed the old

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ground of royal despotism, he laid a new and a firmer one. To create a society at all, he held that the whole body of the governed must have resigned all rights save that of self-preservation into the hands of a single ruler, who was the representative of all. Such a ruler was absolute, for to make terms with him implied a man making terms with himself. The transfer of rights was inalienable, and after generations were as much bound by it as the generation which made the transfer. As the head of the whole body, the ruler judged every question, settled the laws of civil justice or injustice, or decided between religion and superstition. His was a Divine Right, and the only Divine Right, because in him were absorbed all the rights of each of his subjects. It was not in any constitutional check that Hobbes looked for the prevention of tyranny, but in the common education and enlightenment as to their real end and the best mode of reaching it on the part of both subjects and Prince. And the real end of both was the weal of the Commonwealth at large. It was in laying boldly down this end of government, as well as in the basis of contract on which he made government repose, that Hobbes really influenced all later politics.

That Cromwell discerned the strength of such currents of opinion as those which we have described may fairly be doubted. But he saw that Puritanism had missed its aim. He saw that the attempt to secure spiritual results by material force had failed, as it always fails. It had broken down before the indifference and resentment of the great mass of the people, of men who were neither lawless nor enthusiasts, but who clung to the older traditions of social order, and whose humour and good sense revolted alike from the artificial conception of human life which Puritanism had formed, and from its effort to force such a conception on a people by law. It broke down too before the corruption of the Puritans themselves. It was impossible to distinguish between the saint and the hypocrite

*Cromwell's
conscious-
ness of
failure.*

CHAP. XII. as soon as godliness became profitable. Ashley Cooper, a
 The Pro- sceptic in religion and a profligate in morals, was among
 tectorate. "the loudest bagpipes of the squeaking train." Even
 1653- amongst the really earnest Puritans prosperity disclosed
 1660. a pride, a worldliness, a selfish hardness which had been
 hidden in the hour of persecution. What was yet more
 significant was the irreligious and sceptical temper of the
 younger generation which had grown up amidst the storms
 of the Civil War. The children even of the leading Puri-
 tans stood aloof from Puritanism. The eldest of Crom-
 well's sons made small pretensions to religion. Milton's
 nephews, though reared in his house, were writing satires
 against Puritan hypocrisy and contributing to collections
 of filthy songs. The two daughters of the great preacher,
 Stephen Marshall, were to figure as actresses on the in-
 famous stage of the Restoration. The tone of the Pro-
 tector's later speeches shows his consciousness that the
 ground was slipping from under his feet. He no longer
 dwells on the dream of a Puritan England, of a nation
 rising as a whole into a people of God. He falls back on
 the phrases of his youth, and the saints become again a
 "peculiar people," a remnant, a fragment among the
 nation at large.

*Dissolution
 of the
 Parliament.*

But with the consciousness of failure in realizing his
 ideal of government the charm of government was gone;
 and now to the weariness of power was added the weak-
 ness and feverish impatience of disease. Vigorous and
 energetic as Cromwell's life had seemed, his health was by
 no means as strong as his will; he had been struck down
 by intermittent fever in the midst of his triumphs both in
 Scotland and in Ireland, and during the past year he
 had suffered from repeated attacks of it. "I have some
 infirmities upon me," he owned twice over in his speech
 at the re-opening of the Parliament in January, 1658, after
 an adjournment of six months; and his feverish irritability
 was quickened by the public danger. No supplies had
 been voted, and the pay of the army was heavily in arrear,

while its temper grew more and more sullen at the appear-
 ance of the new Constitution and the re-awakening of the
 royalist intrigues. Cromwell had believed that his mili-
 tary successes would secure compliance with his demands;
 but the temper of the Commons was even more irritable
 than his own. Under the terms of the new Constitution
 the members excluded in the preceding year took their
 places again in the House; and it was soon clear that the
 Parliament reflected the general mood of the nation. The
 tone of the Commons became captious and quarrelsome.
 They still delayed the grant of supplies. Meanwhile a
 hasty act of the Protector in giving to his nominees in
 "the other House," as the new second chamber he had
 devised was called, the title of "Lords," kindled a strife
 between the two Houses which was busily fanned by
 Haselrig and other opponents of the Government. It was
 contended that the "other House" had under the new Con-
 stitution simply judicial and not legislative powers. Such
 a contention struck at once at Cromwell's work of restoring
 the old political forms of English life: and the reappearance
 of Parliamentary strife threw him at last, says an observer
 at his court, "into a rage and passion like unto madness."
 What gave weight to it was the growing strength of the
 royalist party, and its hopes of a coming rising. Such a
 rising had in fact been carefully prepared; and Charles
 with a large body of Spanish troops drew to the coast of
 Flanders to take advantage of it. His hopes were above all
 encouraged by the strife in the Commons, and their mani-
 fest dislike of the system of the Protectorate. It was this
 that drove Cromwell to action. Summoning his coach, by
 a sudden impulse, the Protector drove on the fourth of
 February with a few guards to Westminster; and, setting
 aside the remonstrances of Fleetwood, summoned the two
 Houses to his presence. "I do dissolve this Parliament,"
 he ended a speech of angry rebuke, "and let God be judge
 between you and me."

Fatal as was the error, for the moment all went well.

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*Death of
 Cromwell.*

CHAP. XII. The army was reconciled by the blow levelled at its opponents, and a few murmurers who appeared in its ranks were weeded out by a careful remodelling. The triumphant officers vowed to stand or fall with his Highness. The danger of a royalist rising vanished before a host of addresses from the counties. Great news too came from abroad, where victory in Flanders, and the cession of Dunkirk in June, set the seal on Cromwell's glory. But the fever crept steadily on, and his looks told the tale of death to the Quaker, Fox, who met him riding in Hampton Court Park. "Before I came to him," he says, "as he rode at the head of his Life Guards, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him, and when I came to him he looked like a dead man." In the midst of his triumph Cromwell's heart was heavy in fact with the sense of failure. He had no desire to play the tyrant; nor had he any belief in the permanence of a mere tyranny. He clung desperately to the hope of bringing over the country to his side. He had hardly dissolved the Parliament before he was planning the summons of another, and angry at the opposition which his Council offered to the project. "I will take my own resolutions," he said gloomily to his household; "I can no longer satisfy myself to sit still, and make myself guilty of the loss of all the honest party and of the nation itself." But before his plans could be realized the overtaxed strength of the Protector suddenly gave way. Early in August 1658 his sickness took a more serious form. He saw too clearly the chaos into which his death would plunge England to be willing to die. "Do not think I shall die," he burst out with feverish energy to the physicians who gathered round him; "say not I have lost my reason! I tell you the truth. I know it from better authority than any you can have from Galen or Hippocrates. It is the answer of God himself to our prayers!" Prayer indeed rose from every side for his recovery, but death grew steadily nearer, till even Cromwell felt that his hour was come. "I would be willing to live," the dying man

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murmured, "to be further serviceable to God and his people, but my work is done! Yet God will be with his people!" A storm which tore roofs from houses, and levelled huge trees in every forest, seemed a fitting prelude to the passing away of his mighty spirit. Three days later, on the third of September, the day which had witnessed his victories of Worcester and Dunbar, Cromwell quietly breathed his last.

So absolute even in death was his sway over the minds of men, that, to the wonder of the excited royalists, even a doubtful nomination on his death-bed was enough to secure the peaceful succession of his son, Richard Cromwell. Many in fact who had rejected the authority of his father submitted peaceably to the new Protector. Their motives were explained by Baxter, the most eminent among the Presbyterian ministers, in an address to Richard which announced his adhesion. "I observe," he says, "that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that Temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly and made great wars." The new Protector was a weak and worthless man; but the bulk of the nation were content to be ruled by one who was at any rate no soldier, no Puritan, and no innovator. Richard was known to be lax and worldly in his conduct, and he was believed to be conservative and even royalist in heart. The tide of reaction was felt even in his Council. Their first act was to throw aside one of the greatest of Cromwell's reforms and to fall back in the summons which they issued for a new Parliament on the old system of election. It was felt far more keenly in the tone of the new House of Commons when it met in January 1659. The republicans under Vane, backed adroitly by the members who were secretly royalist,

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Richard
Cromwell,
Protector.

CHAP. XII. fell hotly on Cromwell's system. The fiercest attack of all came from Sir Ashley Cooper, a Dorsetshire gentleman who had changed sides in the Civil War, had fought for the King and then for the Parliament, had been a member of Cromwell's Council, and had of late ceased to be a member of it. His virulent invective on "his Highness of deplorable memory, who with fraud and force deprived you of your liberty when living and entailed slavery on you at his death," was followed by an equally virulent invective against the army. "They have not only subdued their enemies," said Cooper, "but the masters who raised and maintained them! They have not only conquered Scotland and Ireland, but rebellious England too; and there suppressed a Malignant party of magistrates and laws."

*Divisions
in the
army.*

The army was quick with its reply. Already in the preceding November it had shown its suspicion of the new government by demanding the appointment of a soldier as General in the place of the new Protector, who had assumed the command. The tone of the Council of Officers now became so menacing that the Commons ordered the dismissal of all officers who refused to engage "not to disturb or interrupt the free meetings of Parliament." Richard ordered the Council of Officers to dissolve. Their reply was a demand for the dissolution of the Parliament; and with this demand, on the twenty-second of April, Richard was forced to comply. The purpose of the army however was still to secure a settled government; and setting aside the new Protector, whose weakness was now evident, they resolved to come to a reconciliation with the republican party, and to recall the fragment of the Commons whom they had expelled from St. Stephen's in 1653. The arrangement was quickly brought about; and in May, of the one hundred and sixty members who had continued to sit after the King's death, about ninety returned to their seats and resumed the administration of affairs. The continued exclusion of the members who had

been "purged" from the House in 1648, proved that no real intention existed of restoring a legal rule; and the soldiers trusted that the Rump whom they had restored to power would be bound to them by the growing danger both to republicanism and to religious liberty. But not even their passion for these "causes" could make men endure the rule of the sword. The House was soon at strife with the soldiers. In spite of Vane's counsels, it proposed a reform of the officers, and though a royalist rising in Cheshire during August threw the disputants for a moment together, the struggle revived as the danger passed away. A new hope indeed filled men's minds. Not only was the nation sick of military rule, but the army, unconquerable so long as it held together, at last showed signs of division. In Ireland and Scotland the troops protested against the attitude of their English comrades; and Monk, the commander of the Scottish army, threatened to march on London and free the Parliament from their pressure. The knowledge of these divisions encouraged Haselrig and his coadjutors in the Commons to demand the dismissal of Fleetwood and Lambert from their commands. They answered in October by driving the Parliament again from Westminster, and by marching under Lambert to the north to meet the army under Monk.

Lambert however suffered himself to be lured into inaction by negotiations, while Monk gathered a Convention at Edinburgh, and strengthened himself with money and recruits. His attitude was enough to rouse England to action. Portsmouth closed its gates against the delegates of the soldiers. The fleet declared against them. So rapidly did the tide of feeling rise throughout the country that the army at the close of December was driven to undo the work by recalling the Rump. But the concession only aided the force of resistance by shewing the weakness of the tyranny which England was resolute to throw off. Lambert's men fell from him, and finding

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*Return of
Charles.*

CHAP. XII. his path clear, Monk, without revealing his purport, advanced rapidly to Coldstream, and crossed the border in the first days of 1660. His action broke the spell of terror which had weighed upon the country. The cry of "A free Parliament" ran like fire through the country. Not only Fairfax, who appeared in arms in Yorkshire, but the ships on the Thames and the mob which thronged the streets of London caught up the cry. Still steadily advancing, but lavishing protestations of loyalty to the Rump while he accepted petitions for a "Free Parliament," Monk on the third of February entered London unopposed. From the moment of his entry the restoration of the Stuarts became inevitable. The army, resolute as it still remained for the maintenance of "the cause," was deceived by Monk's declarations of loyalty to it, and rendered powerless by his adroit dispersion of the troops over the country. At the instigation of Ashley Cooper, those who remained of the members who had been excluded from the House of Commons in 1648 again forced their way into Parliament, and at once resolved on a dissolution and the election of a new House of Commons. The dissolution in March was followed by a last struggle of the army for its old supremacy. Lambert escaped from the Tower and called his fellow-soldiers to arms; but he was hotly pursued, overtaken, and routed near Daventry; and on the twenty-fifth of April the new House, which bears the name of the Convention, assembled at Westminster. It had hardly taken the solemn League and Covenant which showed its Presbyterian temper, and its leaders had only begun to draw up terms on which the King's restoration might be assented to, when they found that Monk was in negotiation with the exiled Court. All exaction of terms was now impossible; a Declaration from Breda, in which Charles promised a general pardon, religious toleration, and satisfaction to the army, was received with a burst of national enthusiasm; and the old Constitution was restored by a solemn vote of the Convention, "that

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according to the ancient and fundamental laws of this Kingdom, the government is, and ought to be, by King, Lords, and Commons." The King was at once invited to hasten to his realm; and on the twenty-fifth of May Charles landed at Dover, and made his way amidst the shouts of a great multitude to Whitehall. "It is my own fault," laughed the new King with characteristic irony, "that I had not come back sooner; for I find nobody who does not tell me he has always longed for my return."

In his progress to the capital Charles passed in review the soldiers assembled on Blackheath. Betrayed by their general, abandoned by their leaders, surrounded as they were by a nation in arms, the gloomy silence of their ranks awed even the careless King with a sense of danger. But none of the victories of the New Model were so glorious as the victory which it won over itself. Quietly, and without a struggle, as men who bowed to the inscrutable will of God, the farmers and traders who had dashed Rupert's chivalry to pieces on Naseby field, who had scattered at Worcester the "army of the aliens," and driven into helpless flight the sovereign that now came "to enjoy his own again," who had renewed beyond sea the glories of Cressy and Agincourt, had mastered the Parliament, had brought a King to justice and the block, had given laws to England, and held even Cromwell in awe, became farmers and traders again, and were known among their fellow-men by no other sign than their greater soberness and industry. And, with them, Puritanism laid down the sword. It ceased from the long attempt to build up a kingdom of God by force and violence, and fell back on its truer work of building up a kingdom of righteousness in the hearts and consciences of men. It was from the moment of its seeming fall that its real victory began. As soon as the wild orgy of the Restoration was over, men began to see that nothing that was really worthy in the work of Puritanism had been undone. The revels of Whitehall, the scepticism and debauchery of courtiers,

Fall of
Puritanism.

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CHAP. XII. the corruption of statesmen, left the mass of Englishmen what Puritanism had made them, serious, earnest, sober in life and conduct, firm in their love of Protestantism and of freedom. In the Revolution of 1688 Puritanism did the work of civil liberty which it had failed to do in that of 1642. It wrought out through Wesley and the revival of the eighteenth century the work of religious reform which its earlier efforts had only thrown back for a hundred years. Slowly but steadily it introduced its own seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, English politics. The history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism.

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BOOK VIII.

THE REVOLUTION.

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AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VIII.

The social change of the Restoration is illustrated by the picture of court life in Anthony Hamilton's "Memoirs of the Count de Grammont," by the memoirs of Reresby, Pepys and Evelyn, and the dramatic works of Wycherly and Etherege. For the general character of its comedy see Lord Macaulay's "Essay on the Dramatists of the Restoration." The histories of the Royal Society by Thompson or Wade, with Sir D. Brewster's "Biography of Newton," preserve the earlier annals of English Science, which are condensed by Hallam in his "Literary History" (vol. iv.). Clarendon gives a detailed account of his own ministry in his "Life," which forms a continuation of his "History of the Rebellion." The relations of the Church and the Dissenters during this period may be seen in Neal's "History of the Puritans," Calamy's "Memoirs of the Ejected Ministers," Mr. Dixon's "Life of Penn," Baxter's "Autobiography," and Bunyan's account of his sufferings in his various works. For the political story of the period as a whole our best authorities are Bishop Kennet's "Register," and Burnet's lively "History of my own Times." The memoirs of Sir W. Temple, with his correspondence, are of great value up to their close in 1679. Mr. Christie's "Life of Shaftesbury" is a defence and in some ways a successful defence, of that statesman's career and of the Whig policy at this time, which may be studied also in Earl Russell's life of his ancestor, William, Lord Russell. To these we may add the fragments of James the Second's autobiography preserved in Macpherson's "Original Papers" (of very various degrees of value), the "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland" by Dalrymple, the first to discover the real secret of the negotiations with France, M. Mignet's "Négotiations relatives à la Succession d'Espagne," a work indispensable for a knowledge of foreign affairs during this period, Welwood's "Memoirs," and Luttrell's "Diary."

Throughout the whole reign of Charles the Second Hallam's "Constitutional History" is singularly judicious and full in its information. Lingard becomes of importance during this period from the original materials to which he has had access, as well as from his clear and dispassionate statement of the Catholic side of the question. Ranke in his "History of the Seventeenth Century" has thrown great light

on the diplomatic history of the later Stuart reigns : on internal and constitutional points he is cool and dispassionate but of less value. The great work of Lord Macaulay, which practically ends at the Peace of Ryswick, is continued by Lord Stanhope in his "History of England under Queen Anne," and his "History of England from the Peace of Utrecht." For Marlborough the main authority must be the Duke's biography by Archdeacon Coxe with his "Despatches." The character of the Tory opposition may be studied in Swift's Journal to Stella and his political tracts, as well as in Bolinbroke's correspondence. The French side of the war and negotiations has been given by M. Henri Martin ("Histoire de France") in what is the most accurate and judicious portion of his work. For the earlier period of the Georges Coxe's "Life of Sir Robert Walpole," Horace Walpole's "Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second," and Lord Herve's amusing "Memoirs from the Accession of George the Second to the Death of Queen Caroline," give the main materials on the one side ; Bolinbroke's "Patriot King," his "Letter to Sir W. Wyndham," and his correspondence afford some insight into the other. Horace Walpole's "Letters to Sir Horace Mann" give a minute account of his father's fall.

For the elder Pitt we have the Chatham Correspondence, a life by Thackeray, and two brilliant Essays by Lord Macaulay. Another of Lord Macaulay's Essays may be used with Sir John Malcolm's biography for the life of Lord Clive and the early history of British India, a fuller account of which may of course be found in general histories of India, such as that by James Mill. Carlyle's Frederick the Great contains a picturesque recital of the Seven Years' War, and of England's share in it ; while the earlier relations of England and Frederick may be studied more coolly and thoroughly in Ranke's "Nine Books of Prussian History," published in an English version under the name of his "History of Prussia." The earlier part of the "Annual Register," which begins in 1758, has been attributed to Burke. Southey's biography, or the more elaborate life by Tyerman, gives an account of Wesley and the movement he headed.

CHAPTER I.

THE RESTORATION, 1660-1667.

THE entry of Charles the Second into Whitehall marked a deep and lasting change in the temper of the English people. With it modern England began. The influences which had up to this time moulded our history, the theological influence of the Reformation, the monarchical influence of the new kingship, the feudal influence of the Middle Ages, the yet earlier influence of tradition and custom, suddenly lost power over the minds of men. From the moment of the Restoration we find ourselves all at once among the great currents of thought and activity which have gone on widening and deepening from that time to this. The England around us becomes our own England, an England whose chief forces are industry and science, the love of popular freedom and of law, an England which presses steadily forward to a larger social justice and equality, and which tends more and more to bring every custom and tradition, religious, intellectual, and political, to the test of pure reason.

Between modern thought, on some at least of its more important sides, and the thought of men before the Restoration there is a great gulf fixed. A political thinker in the present day would find it equally hard to discuss any

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point of statesmanship with Lord Burleigh or with Oliver Cromwell. He would find no point of contact between their ideas of national life or national welfare, their conception of government or the ends of government, their mode of regarding economical and social questions, and his own. But no gulf of this sort parts us from the men who followed the Restoration. From that time to this, whatever differences there may have been as to the practical conclusions drawn from them, there has been a substantial agreement as to the grounds of our political, our social, our intellectual, and religious life. Paley would have found no difficulty in understanding Tillotson. Newton and Sir Humphry Davy could have talked together without a sense of severance. There would have been nothing to hinder a perfectly clear discussion on government or law between John Locke and Jeremy Bentham.

The Social
Revolt.

The change from the old England to the new is so startling that we are apt to look on it as a more sudden change than it really was; and the outer aspect of the Restoration does much to strengthen this impression of suddenness. The whole face of England was changed in an instant. All that was noblest and best in Puritanism was whirled away with its pettiness and its tyranny in the current of the nation's hate. Religion had been turned into a system of political and social oppression, and it fell with that system's fall. Godliness became a byword of scorn; sobriety in dress, in speech, in manners was flouted as a mark of the detested Puritanism. Butler in his "Hudibras" poured insult on the past with a pedantic buffoonery for which the general hatred, far more than its humour, secured a hearing. Archbishop Sheldon listened to the mock sermon of a Cavalier who held up the Puritan phrase and the Puritan twang to ridicule in his hall at Lambeth. Duelling and raking became the marks of a fine gentleman; and grave divines winked at the follies of "honest fellows" who fought, gambled, swore, drank, and ended a day of debauchery by a night in the gutter. Life among men of

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fashion vibrated between frivolity and excess. One of the comedies of the time tells the courtier that "he must dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love-letters, an agreeable voice, be amorous and discreet—but not too constant." To graces such as these the rakes of the Restoration added a shamelessness and a brutality which passes belief. Lord Rochester was a fashionable poet, and the titles of some of his poems are such as no pen of our day could copy. Sir Charles Sedley was a fashionable wit, and the foulness of his words made even the porters of Covent Garden pelt him from the balcony when he ventured to address them. The Duke of Buckingham is a fair type of the time, and the most characteristic event in the Duke's life was a duel in which he consummated his seduction of Lady Shrewsbury by killing her husband, while the Countess in disguise as a page held his horse for him and looked on at the murder.

Vicious as the stage was when it opened its doors again on the fall of the Commonwealth it only reflected the general vice of the day. The Comedy of the Restoration borrowed everything from the contemporary Comedy of France save the poetry, the delicacy, and good taste which there veiled its grossness. Seduction, intrigue, brutality, cynicism, debauchery, found fitting expression on the English stage in dialogue of a studied and deliberate foulness, which even its wit fails to redeem from disgust. Wycherly, the popular playwright of the time, remains the most brutal among all dramatists; and nothing gives so damning an impression of his day as the fact that he found actors to repeat his words and audiences to applaud them. Men such as Wycherly gave Milton models for the Belial of his great poem, "than whom a spirit more lewd fell not from heaven, or more gross to love vice for itself." The dramatist piques himself on the frankness and "plain-dealing" which painted the world as he saw it, a world of brawls and assignations, of orgies at Vauxhall and fights with the watch, of lies and *doubles-entendres*, of knaves and dupes,

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of men who sold their daughters, and women who cheated their husbands. But the cynicism of Wycherly was no greater than that of the men about him; and in mere love of what was vile, in contempt of virtue and disbelief in purity or honesty, the King himself stood ahead of any of his subjects.

It is easy however to exaggerate the extent of this reaction. So far as we can judge from the memoirs of the time its more violent forms were practically confined to the capital and the court. The mass of Englishmen were satisfied with getting back their may-poles and mince-pies; and a large part of the people remained Puritan in life and belief though they threw aside many of the outer characteristics of Puritanism. Nor was the revolution in feeling as sudden as it seemed. Even if the political strength of Puritanism had remained unbroken its social influence must soon have ceased. The young Englishmen who grew up in the midst of civil war knew nothing of the bitter tyranny which gave its zeal and fire to the religion of their fathers. From the social and religious anarchy around them, from the endless controversies and discussions of the time, they drank in the spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of free enquiry. If religious enthusiasm had broken the spell of ecclesiastical tradition its own extravagance broke the spell of religious enthusiasm; and the new generation turned in disgust to try forms of political government and spiritual belief by the cooler and less fallible test of reason.

It is this rationalizing tendency of the popular mind, this indifference to the traditions and ideals of the past, this practical and experimental temper, which found its highest expression in the sudden popularity of the pursuit of physical science. Of the two little companies of enquirers whom we have already noticed as gathering at the close of the Civil War, that which remained in the capital and had at last been broken up by the troubles of the Second Protectorate was revived at the Restoration by

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the return to London of the more eminent members of the group which had assembled at Oxford. But the little company of philosophers had hardly begun their meetings at Gresham College when they found themselves objects of a general interest. Science suddenly became the fashion of the day. Charles the Second was himself a fair chymist, and took a keen interest in the problems of navigation. The Duke of Buckingham varied his freaks of rhyming, drinking, and fiddling by fits of devotion to his laboratory. Poets like Dryden and Cowley, courtiers like Sir Robert Murray and Sir Kenelm Digby, joined the scientific company to which in token of his sympathy with it the King gave the title of "The Royal Society." The curious glass toys called Prince Rupert's drops recall the scientific enquiries which amused the old age of the great cavalry-leader of the Civil War. Wits and fops crowded to the meetings of the new Society. Statesmen like Lord Somers felt honoured at being chosen its presidents.

The definite establishment of the Royal Society in 1662 marks the opening of a great age of scientific discovery in England. Almost every year of the half-century which followed saw some step made to a wider and truer knowledge of physical fact. Our first national observatory rose at Greenwich, and modern astronomy began with the long series of observations which immortalized the name of Flamsteed. His successor, Halley, undertook the investigation of the tides, of comets, and of terrestrial magnetism. Hooke improved the microscope and gave a fresh impulse to microscopical research. Boyle made the air-pump a means of advancing the science of pneumatics, and became the founder of experimental chymistry. Wilkins pointed forward to the science of philology in his scheme of a universal language. Sydenham introduced a careful observation of nature and facts which changed the whole face of medicine. The physiological researches of Willis first threw light upon the structure of the brain. Woodward was the founder of mineralogy. In his edition of

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Willoughby's "Ornithology," and in his own "History of Fishes," John Ray was the first to raise zoology to the rank of a science; and the first scientific classification of animals was attempted in his "Synopsis of Quadrupeds." Modern botany began with Ray's "History of Plants," and the researches of an Oxford professor, Robert Morrison; while Grow divided with Malpighi the credit of founding the study of vegetable physiology.

But great as some of these names undoubtedly are they are lost in the lustre of Isaac Newton. Newton was born at Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire on Christmas-day, 1642, the memorable year which saw the outbreak of the Civil War. In the year of the Restoration he entered Cambridge, where the teaching of Isaac Barrow quickened his genius for mathematics, and where the method of Descartes had superseded the older modes of study. From the close of his Cambridge career his life became a series of great physical discoveries. At twenty-three he facilitated the calculation of planetary movements by his theory of Fluxions. The optical discoveries to which he was led by his experiments with the prism, and which he partly disclosed in the lectures which he delivered as Mathematical Professor at Cambridge, were embodied in the theory of light which he laid before the Royal Society on becoming a Fellow of it. His discovery of the law of gravitation had been made as early as 1666; but the erroneous estimate which was then generally received of the earth's diameter prevented him from disclosing it for sixteen years; and it was not till 1687, on the eve of the Revolution, that the "Principia" revealed to the world his new theory of the Universe.

The
Latitudi-
narian
Theology.

It is impossible to do more than indicate in such a summary as we have given the wonderful activity of directly scientific thought which distinguished the age of the Restoration. But the sceptical and experimental temper of mind which this activity disclosed was telling at the same time upon every phase of the world around it.

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We see the attempt to bring religious speculation into harmony with the conclusions of reason and experience in the school of Latitudinarian theologians which sprang from the group of thinkers that gathered on the eve of the Civil War round Lord Falkland at Great Tew. With the Restoration the Latitudinarians came at once to the front. They were soon distinguished from both Puritans and High Churchmen by their opposition to dogma, by their preference of reason to tradition whether of the Bible or the Church, by their basing religion on a natural theology, by their aiming at rightness of life rather than at correctness of opinion, by their advocacy of toleration and comprehension as the grounds of Christian unity. Chillingworth and Taylor found successors in the restless good sense of Burnet, the enlightened piety of Tillotson, and the calm philosophy of Bishop Butler. From this moment indeed the work of English theologians turned from the bold assertion of the supremacy of revealed truth over natural reason to a more cautious assertion of the essential harmony of the one with the other. Boyle varied his philosophical experiments by demonstrations of the unity of dogmatic and natural religion. So moderate and philosophical was the temper displayed by Cudworth in his "Intellectual System of the Universe," that the bigots of his day charged him with the atheistic principles which he was endeavouring to refute. But the change of tone in the theologians of the Reformation was itself an indication of the new difficulties which theology had to meet. The bold scepticism of Hobbes was adopted by courtiers and politicians. Charles himself was divided between superstition and Hobbism. Shaftesbury was a Deist. The bulk of the leading statesmen of the time looked on religious questions in a purely political light.

The impulse which was carrying religious speculation into regions hitherto strange to it told equally on political and social enquiry. The researches of Sir Josiah Child

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and still more of Sir William Petty not only threw light on the actual state of English trade but pointed forward to the future science of Political Economy. For the moment however philosophical speculation on the nature of Government eclipsed the interest of statistical research. Though the Restoration brought Hobbes a pension his two great works were condemned by Parliament, and Hobbism became ere he died a popular synonym for political as well as religious immorality. But in spite of the bitter resistance offered to it his assertion of a rational method of political enquiry superseded more and more the older doctrines of a religious and traditional polity. After Clarendon no English statesman really believed in any divine right of the sovereign he served; and Charles himself probably believed it still less than his ministers. The fiction of a contract between governor and governed, on which Hobbes built up his theory of a state, passed silently into general acceptance. John Locke, the foremost political thinker of the Restoration, derived political authority like Hobbes from the consent of the governed, and adopted the common weal as the end of Government. But the practical temper of the time moulded the new theory into a form which contrasted strangely with that given to it by its first inventor. The political philosophy of Locke indeed was little more than a formal statement of the conclusions which the bulk of Englishmen had drawn from the great struggle of the Civil War. In his theory the people remain passively in possession of the power which they have delegated to the Prince, and have the right to withdraw it if it be used for purposes inconsistent with the end which society was formed to promote. To the origin of all power in the people, and the end of all power for the people's good—the two great doctrines of Hobbes—Locke added the right of resistance, the responsibility of princes to their subjects for a due execution of their trust, and the supremacy of legislative assemblies as expressing the voice of the people itself.

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It was in this modified and enlarged form that the new political philosophy found general acceptance after the Revolution of 1688. But powerful as was its influence in the thirty years which separated that event from the Restoration it remained during that period an influence which told but slowly on the people at large. It is indeed this severance for the time between the thinking classes and the general bulk of the nation which makes its history so difficult and perplexing. While sceptics and divines were drifting to questions which involved the very being of religion itself the mass of Englishmen were still without a doubt, and dead to every religious struggle save the old struggle of Protestantism with the Pope. While statesmen and philosophers were smiling at Sir Robert Filmer and his "Patriarchal Theory of Government," the people remained blind to any notion of an original contract, and every pulpit resounded with the doctrine of a divine right of kings. It was only by slow steps, and above all by the practical stress of events, that England was driven forward to religious toleration or to the establishment of parliamentary government in the place of monarchy.

Slowly and gradually however it was driven forward to both. Even at the outset of the Restoration the temper of England had in fact drifted far from the past to which it thought to return. The work of the Long Parliament indeed seemed to be undone when Charles entered Whitehall. Not only was the Monarchy restored but it was restored without restriction or condition; and of the two great influences which had hitherto served as checks on its power the first, that of Puritanism, had become hateful to the nation at large, while the second, the tradition of constitutional liberty, was discredited by the issue of the Civil War. But, wild as was the tumult of demonstrative loyalty, not one of the great steps towards constitutional freedom which had been gained by the patriots of 1641 was really lost. The prerogatives for which Charles the First had struggled were quietly relinquished by his son.

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Transi-
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The very cavaliers who had welcomed the King to "his own again" never dreamt of restoring the system of government which their opponents had overthrown. Twenty years of parliamentary rule, however broken and mixed with political and religious tyranny, had made the return to ship money or monopolies or the Star Chamber impossible. Men had become so accustomed to freedom that they forgot how recent a thing its unquestioned existence was. From the first therefore the great "revolution of the seventeenth century," as it has been called, went steadily on. The supreme power was gradually transferred from the Crown to the House of Commons. Step by step Parliament drew nearer to a solution of the political problem which had so long foiled its efforts, the problem how to make its will the law of administrative action without itself undertaking the task of administration. It is only by carefully fixing our eyes on this transfer of power, and by noting the successive steps towards its realization, that we can understand the complex history of the Restoration and the Revolution.

Charles
the
Second.

Changed to the very core, yet hardly conscious of the change, drifting indeed steadily towards a wider knowledge and a firmer freedom, but still a mere medley of Puritan morality and social revolt, of traditional loyalty and political scepticism, of bigotry and free enquiry, of science and Popish plots, the England of the Restoration was reflected in its King. What his subjects saw in Charles the Second was a pleasant, brown-faced gentleman playing with his spaniels, or drawing caricatures of his ministers, or flinging cakes to the water-fowl in the park. To all outer seeming Charles was the most consummate of idlers. "He delighted," says one of his courtiers, "in a bewitching kind of pleasure called sauntering." The business-like Pepys discovered, as he brought his work to the Council Board, that "the King do mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight

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or thoughts of business." That Charles had great natural parts no one doubted. In his earlier days of defeat and danger he showed a cool courage and presence of mind which never failed him in the many perilous moments of his reign. His temper was pleasant and social, his manners perfect, and there was a careless freedom and courtesy in his address which won over everybody who came into his presence. His education indeed had been so grossly neglected that he could hardly read a plain Latin book; but his natural quickness and intelligence showed itself in his pursuit of chymistry and anatomy, and in the interest he showed in the scientific enquiries of the Royal Society. Like Peter the Great his favourite study was that of naval architecture, and he piqued himself on being a clever shipbuilder. He had some little love too for art and poetry, and a taste for music. But his shrewdness and vivacity showed themselves most in his endless talk. He was fond of telling stories, and he told them with a good deal of grace and humour. He held his own fairly with the wits of his Court, and bandied repartees on equal terms with Sedley or Buckingham. Even Rochester in his merciless epigram was forced to own that "Charles never said a foolish thing." He had inherited in fact his grandfather's gift of pithy sayings, and his habitual irony often gave an amusing turn to them. When his brother, the most unpopular man in England, solemnly warned him of plots against his life, Charles laughingly bade him set all fear aside. "They will never kill me, James," he said, "to make you king."

But courage and wit and ability seemed to have been bestowed on Charles in vain. He only laughed when Tom Killigrew told him frankly that badly as things were going on there was one man whose industry could set them right, "and this is one Charles Stuart, who now spends his time in using his lips about the Court and hath no other employment." Charles made no secret in fact

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of his hatred of business. Nor did he give to outer observers any sign of ambition. The one thing he seemed in earnest about was sensual pleasure, and he took his pleasure with a cynical shamelessness which roused the disgust even of his shameless courtiers. Mistress followed mistress, and the guilt of a troop of profligate women was blazoned to the world by the gift of titles and estates. The royal bastards were set amongst English nobles. The ducal house of Grafton springs from the King's adultery with Barbara Palmer, whom he created Duchess of Cleveland. The Dukes of St. Albans owe their origin to his intrigue with Nell Gwynn, a player and a courtesan. Louise de Querouaille, a mistress sent by France to win him to its interests, became Duchess of Portsmouth and ancestress of the house of Richmond. An earlier mistress, Lucy Walters, had made him father in younger days of the boy whom he raised to the Dukedom of Monmouth, and to whom the Dukes of Buccleuch trace their line. But Charles was far from being content with these recognized mistresses or with a single form of self-indulgence. Gambling and drinking helped to fill up the vacant moments when he could no longer toy with his favourites or bet at Newmarket. No thought of remorse or of shame seems ever to have crossed his mind. "He could not think God would make a man miserable," he said once, "only for taking a little pleasure out of the way." From shame he was shielded by his cynical disbelief in human virtue. Virtue indeed he regarded simply as a trick by which clever hypocrites imposed upon fools. Honour among men seemed to him as mere a pretence as chastity among women. Gratitude he had none, for he looked upon self-interest as the only motive of men's actions, and though soldiers had died and women had risked their lives for him, "he loved others as little as he thought they loved him." But if he felt no gratitude for benefits he felt no resentment for wrongs. He was incapable either of love or of hate. The only feel-

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ing he retained for his fellow-men was that of an amused contempt.

It was difficult for Englishmen to believe that any real danger to liberty could come from an idler and a voluptuary such as Charles the Second. But in the very difficulty of believing this lay half the King's strength. He had in fact no taste whatever for the despotism of the Stuarts who had gone before him. His shrewdness laughed his grandfather's theories of Divine Right down the wind, while his indolence made such a personal administration as that which his father delighted in burthensome to him. He was too humorous a man to care for the pomp and show of power, and too good-natured a man to play the tyrant. But he believed as firmly as his father or his grandfather had believed in his right to a full possession of the older prerogatives of the Crown. He looked on Parliaments as they had looked on them with suspicion and jealousy. He clung as they had clung to the dream of a dispensing power over the execution of the laws. He regarded ecclesiastical affairs as lying within his own personal control, and viewed the interference of the two Houses with church matters as a sheer usurpation. Above all he detested the notion of ministerial responsibility to any but the King, or of a Parliamentary right to interfere in any way with the actual administration of public affairs. "He told Lord Essex," Burnet says, "that he did not wish to be like a Grand Signior, with some mutes about him, and bags of bowstrings to strangle men; but he did not think he was a king so long as a company of fellows were looking into his actions, and examining his ministers as well as his accounts." "A king," he thought, "who might be checked, and have his ministers called to an account, was but a king in name."

In other words Charles had no settled plan of tyranny, but he meant to rule as independently as he could, and from the beginning to the end of his reign there never was a moment when he was not doing something to carry out

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his aim. But he carried it out in a tentative, irregular fashion which it was as hard to detect as to meet. Whenever there was any strong opposition he gave way. If popular feeling demanded the dismissal of his ministers, he dismissed them. If it protested against his declaration of religious indulgence, he recalled it. If it cried for victims in the frenzy of the Popish Plot, he gave it victims till the frenzy was at an end. It was easy for Charles to yield and to wait, and just as easy for him to take up the thread of his purpose afresh the moment the pressure was over. There was one fixed resolve in fact which overrode every other thought in the King's mind, and this was a resolve "not to set out on his travels again." His father had fallen through a quarrel with the two Houses, and Charles was determined to remain on good terms with the Parliament till he was strong enough to pick a quarrel to his profit. At no time has party strife raged more fiercely; in no reign has the temper of the Parliament been more threatening to the Crown. But the cynicism of Charles enabled him to ride out storms which would have wrecked a better and a nobler King. He treated the Lords with an easy familiarity which robbed opposition of its seriousness. "Their debates amused him," he said in his indolent way; and he stood chatting before the fire while peer after peer poured invectives on his ministers, and laughed louder than the rest when Shaftesbury directed his coarsest taunts at the barrenness of the Queen. Courtiers were entrusted with the secret "management" of the Commons; obstinate country gentlemen were brought to the Royal closet to kiss the King's hand and listen to the King's pleasant stories of his escape after Worcester; and still more obstinate country gentlemen were bribed. Where bribes, flattery and management failed Charles was content to yield and to wait till his time came again.

Dissolu-
tion of the
Union.

But even while yielding and waiting he never lost sight of the aim he had set himself. If he had no mind to play the tyrant, he was resolved to be something more than "a

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King in name." If he could not get back all that his father had had he could go on patiently gathering up what fragments of the old royal power still survived, and availing himself of whatever new resources offered themselves. One means of recovering somewhat of the older authority of the Crown lay in the simple refusal to recognize the union of the three kingdoms. If he could not undo what the Puritans had done in England Charles could undo their work in Scotland and in Ireland. Before the Civil War these kingdoms had served as useful checks on English liberty, and by simply regarding the Union which the Long Parliament and the Protector had brought about as a nullity in law it was possible they might become checks again. In his refusal to recognize the Union Charles was supported by public opinion among his English subjects, partly from sheer abhorrence of changes wrought during "the troubles," and partly from a dread that the Scotch and Irish members would form a party in the English Parliament which would always be at the service of the Crown. In both the lesser kingdoms too a measure which seemed to restore somewhat of their national independence was for the moment popular.

But the results of this step were quick in developing themselves. In Scotland the Covenant was at once abolished. The Scotch Parliament which assembled at Edinburgh, the Drunken Parliament as it was called, outdid the wildest loyalty of the English Cavaliers by annulling in a single Act all the proceedings of its predecessors during the last eight-and-twenty years. By this measure the whole existing Church system of Scotland was deprived of legal sanction. The General Assembly had already been prohibited from meeting by Cromwell; the kirk-sessions and ministers' synods were now suspended. The Scotch bishops were again restored to their spiritual preeminence and to their seats in Parliament. An iniquitous trial sent the Marquis of Argyle, the only noble strong enough to oppose the Royal will, to the block; and

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the government was entrusted to a knot of profligate statesmen till it fell into the hands of Lauderdale, one of the ablest and most unscrupulous of the King's ministers. Their policy was steadily directed to two purposes, the first, that of humbling Presbyterianism—as the force which could alone restore Scotland to freedom and enable her to lend aid as before to English liberty in any struggle with the Crown—the second, that of raising a royal army which might be ready in case of need to march over the border to the King's support. In Ireland the dissolution of the Union brought back the bishops to their sees; but whatever wish Charles may have had to restore the balance of Catholic and Protestant as a source of power to the Crown was baffled by the obstinate resistance of the Protestant settlers to any plans for redressing the confiscations of Cromwell. Five years of bitter struggle between the dispossessed loyalists and the new occupants left the Protestant ascendancy unimpaired; and in spite of a nominal surrender of one-third of the confiscated estates to their old possessors hardly a sixth of the profitable land in the island remained in Catholic holding. The claims of the Duke of Ormond too made it necessary to leave the government in his hands, and Ormond's loyalty was too moderate and constitutional to lend itself to any of the schemes of absolute rule which played so great a part in the next reign under Tyrconnell.

The Royal
Army.

But the severance of the two kingdoms from England was in itself a gain to the Royal authority; and Charles turned quietly to the building up of a royal army at home. A standing army had become so hateful a thing to the body of the nation, and above all to the royalists whom the New Model had trodden under foot, that it was impossible to propose its establishment. But in the mind of both Charles and his brother James, the Duke of York, their father's downfall had been owing to the want of a disciplined force which would have trampled out the first efforts of national resistance; and while disbanding the

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New Model Charles availed himself of the alarm created by a mad rising of some Fifth-Monarchy men in London under an old soldier called Venner to retain five thousand horse and foot in his service under the name of his guards. A body of "gentlemen of quality and veteran soldiers, excellently clad, mounted, and ordered," was thus kept ready for service near the royal person; and in spite of the scandal which it aroused the King persisted, steadily but cautiously, in gradually increasing its numbers. Twenty years later it had grown to a force of seven thousand foot and one thousand seven hundred horse and dragoons at home, with a reserve of six fine regiments abroad in the service of the United Provinces.

But it was rather on policy than on open force that Charles counted for success. His position indeed was a strange and perplexing one. All the outer pomp of the monarchy had returned with the restoration. Charles, like his father, was served by the highest nobles on their knees. Nor had the theory of his position in appearance changed. The principle indeed of hereditary kingship had gained a new strength from the troubles of the last twenty years. The fall of the monarchy had been followed so closely by that of the other institutions, political and religious, of the realm, its restoration coincided so exactly with their revival, that the crown had become the symbol of that national tradition, that historical continuity, without which the practical sense of Englishmen felt then, as Burke felt afterwards, that men were "but as flies in a summer." How profound a disgust the violent interruption of this continuous progress by the clean sweep of the Civil War had left behind it was seen in the indifference with which measures such as the union of the three kingdoms or the reform of parliamentary representation were set aside as sharing in the general vice of the time from which they sprang. It was seen as vividly at even a later time in the instant ruin of Shaftesbury's popularity from the moment when he was believed to be plotting

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the renewal of civil war. But if the Monarchy was strengthened by its association with the tradition of constitutional freedom it was henceforth inseparably bound to the freedom which strengthened it. The Cavalier who had shouted for the King's return had shouted also for the return of a free Parliament. The very Chief Justice who asserted at the trial of the Regicides the personal freedom of the King from any responsibility to the nation asserted just as strongly that doctrine of ministerial responsibility against which Charles the First had struggled. "The law in all cases preserves the person of the King to be authorized," said Sir Orlando Bridgeman, "but what is done by his ministers unlawfully, there is a remedy against his ministers for it." It was the desire of every royalist to blot out the very memory of the troubles in which monarchy and freedom had alike disappeared, to take up again as if it had never been broken the thread of our political history. But the point at which even royalists took it up was not at the moment of the Tyranny, but at the moment of the Long Parliament's first triumph when that tyranny had been utterly undone. In his wish to revive those older claims of the crown which the Long Parliament had for ever set aside the young King found himself alone. His closest adherents, his warmest friends, were constitutional royalists of the temper of Falkland or Culpepper; partisans of an absolute monarchy, of such a monarchy as his grandfather had dreamed of and his father for a few years carried into practice, there now were none.

Charles
and
English
Religion.

In his political aims therefore Charles could look for no help within his realm. Nor did he stand less alone in his religious aims. In heart, whether the story of his renunciation of Protestantism during his exile be true or no, he had long ceased to be a Protestant. Whatever religious feeling he had was on the side of Catholicism; he encouraged conversions among his courtiers, and the last act of his life was to seek formal admission into the Roman Church. But his feelings were rather political than

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religious. The English Roman Catholics formed a far larger part of the population then than now, and their wealth and local influence gave them a political importance which they have long since lost. The Stuarts had taught them to look to the Crown for protection against the Protestant bigotry around them, and they repaid this shelter by aiding Charles the First in his war on the Parliament, and by liberally supplying his son with money during his exile. He had promised in return to procure toleration for their worship, and every motive of gratitude as well as self-interest led him to redeem his pledge. But he was already looking, however vaguely, to something more than Catholic toleration. He saw that despotism in the State could hardly co-exist with free enquiry and free action in matters of the conscience; and that government, in his own words, "was a safer and easier thing where the authority was believed infallible, and the faith and submission of the people were implicit." The difficulties in the way of such a religious change probably seemed the less to him from his long residence in Roman Catholic countries and from his own religious scepticism. Two years indeed after his restoration he had already despatched an agent to Rome to arrange the terms of a reconciliation between the Anglican Church and the Papacy. But though he counted much for the success of his project of toleration on taking advantage of the dissensions between Protestant Churchmen and Protestant Dissenters he soon discovered that in this or any wider religious project he stood utterly alone. Clarendon and the Cavaliers were as bitterly anti-Catholic as the wildest fanatic in his realm. For any real success in his religious as in his political aims he must look elsewhere than at home.

Holland had been the first power to offer him its aid in the renewal of the old defensive alliance which had united the two countries before the Civil War, and it had accompanied its offer by hints of a heavy subsidy. But offers and hints were alike withdrawn when it was found that

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the new government persisted in enforcing the Navigation Act which the Long Parliament had passed. Spain, to which Charles looked with greater hope, demanded terms of alliance which were impossible—the restoration of Jamaica and the cession of Dunkirk. One ally only remained. At this moment France was the dominant power in Christendom. The religious wars which began with the Reformation had broken the strength of the nations around her. Spain was no longer able to fight the battle of Catholicism. The Peace of Westphalia, by the independence it gave to the German princes and the jealousy it kept alive between the Protestant and Catholic powers of Germany, destroyed the strength of the Empire. The German branch of the House of Austria, spent with the long struggle of the Thirty Years' War, had enough to do in battling hard against the advance of the Turks from Hungary on Vienna. The victories of Gustavus and of the generals whom he formed had been dearly purchased by the exhaustion of Sweden. The United Provinces were as yet hardly regarded as a great power, and were trammelled by their contest with England for the empire of the seas.

France.

France alone profited by the general wreck. The wisdom of Henry the Fourth in securing religious peace by a grant of toleration to the Protestants had undone the ill effects of its religious wars. The Huguenots were still numerous south of the Loire, but the loss of their fortresses had turned their energies into the peaceful channels of industry and trade. Feudal disorder was roughly put down by Richelieu; and the policy which gathered all local power into the hands of the crown, though fatal in the end to the real welfare of France, gave it for the moment an air of good government and a command over its internal resources which no other country could boast. Its compact and fertile territory, the natural activity and enterprize of its people, and the rapid growth of its commerce and manufactures, were sources of

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natural wealth which even its heavy taxation failed to check. In the latter half of the seventeenth century France was looked upon as the wealthiest power in Europe. The yearly income of the French crown was double that of England, and even Lewis the Fourteenth trusted as much to the credit of his treasury as to the triumphs of his arms. "After all," he said, when the fortunes of war began to turn against him, "it is the last louis d'or which must win!"

It was in fact this superiority in wealth which enabled France to set on foot forces such as had never been seen in Europe since the downfall of Rome. At the opening of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth its army mustered a hundred thousand men. With the war against Holland it rose to nearly two hundred thousand. In the last struggle against the Grand Alliance there was a time when it counted nearly half a million of men in arms. Nor was France content with these enormous land forces. Since the ruin of Spain the fleets of Holland and of England had alone disputed the empire of the seas. Under Richelieu and Mazarin France could hardly be looked upon as a naval power. But the early years of Lewis saw the creation of a navy of a hundred men of war, and the fleets of France soon held their own against England or the Dutch.

Such a power would have been formidable at any time; but it was doubly formidable when directed by statesmen who in knowledge and ability were without rivals in Europe. No diplomatist could compare with Lionne, no war minister with Louvois, no financier with Colbert. Their young master, Lewis the Fourteenth, bigoted, narrow-minded, commonplace as he was, without personal honour or personal courage, without gratitude and without pity, insane in his pride, insatiable in his vanity, brutal in his selfishness, had still many of the qualities of a great ruler, industry, patience, quickness of resolve, firmness of purpose, a capacity for discerning ability and using it, an

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Four-
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immense self-belief and self-confidence, and a temper utterly destitute indeed of real greatness, but with a dramatic turn for seeming to be great. As a politician Lewis had simply to reap the harvest which the two great Cardinals who went before him had sown. Both had used to the profit of France the exhaustion and dissension which the wars of religion had brought upon Europe. Richelieu turned the scale against the House of Austria by his alliance with Sweden, with the United Provinces, and with the Protestant princes of Germany; and the two great treaties by which Mazarin ended the Thirty Years' War, the Treaty of Westphalia and the Treaty of the Pyrenees, left the Empire disorganized and Spain powerless. From that moment indeed Spain sank into a strange decrepitude. Robbed of the chief source of her wealth by the independence of Holland, weakened at home by the revolt of Portugal, her infantry annihilated by Condé in his victory of Rocroi, her fleet ruined by the Dutch, her best blood drained away to the Indies, the energies of her people destroyed by the suppression of all liberty, civil or religious, her intellectual life crushed by the Inquisition, her industry crippled by the expulsion of the Moors, by financial oppression, and by the folly of her colonial system, the kingdom which under Philip the Second had aimed at the empire of the world lay helpless and exhausted under Philip the Fourth.

France
and
Spain.

The aim of Lewis was to carry on the policy of his predecessors, and above all to complete the ruin of Spain. The conquest of the Spanish provinces in the Netherlands would carry his border to the Scheldt. A more distant hope lay in the probable extinction of the Austrian line which now sat on the throne of Spain. By securing the succession to that throne for a French prince not only Castille and Aragon with the Spanish dependencies in Italy and the Netherlands but the Spanish empire in the New World would be added to the dominions of France. Nothing could save Spain but a union of the European

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powers, and to prevent this union was the work to which the French negotiators were now bending their energies with singular success. The intervention of the Emperor was guarded against by a renewal of the old alliances between France and the lesser German princes. A league with the Turks gave the court of Vienna enough to do on its eastern border. The old league with Sweden, the old friendship with Holland, were skilfully maintained. England alone remained as a possible foe, and at this moment the policy of Charles bound England to the side of Lewis.

France was the wealthiest of European powers, and her subsidies could free Charles from his dependence on the Parliament. The French army was the finest in the world, and French soldiers could put down, it was thought, any resistance from English patriots. The aid of Lewis could alone realize the aims of Charles, and Charles was willing to pay the price, that of a silent concurrence in his Spanish projects, which Lewis demanded for his aid. It was to France therefore, in spite of the resentment he felt at his treatment by her in his time of exile, that Charles turned in the earliest days of his reign. There was no trace as yet of any formal alliance, but two marriages showed the close connection which was to be established between the Kings. Henrietta, the sister of Charles, was wedded to the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Lewis: and this match served as the prelude to that of Charles himself with Catharine of Braganza, a daughter of the King of Portugal. The English ministers were dazzled by the dowry which the new Queen brought with her: half-a-million in money, the fortress of Tangier in the Mediterranean, the trading port of Bombay in the Indies, and a pledge of religious toleration for all English merchants throughout the Portuguese colonies. The world at large saw rather the political significance of the marriage. As the conquest of Portugal by Philip the Second had crowned the greatness of the

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Spanish monarchy, so with its revolt had begun the fall of Spain. To recover Portugal was the dream of every Spaniard, as to aid Portugal in the preservation of its independence was the steady policy of France. The Portuguese marriage, the Portuguese alliance which followed it, ranged England definitely amongst the friends of Lewis and the foes of Spain.

In England itself these indications of the King's foreign policy passed as yet almost without notice. The attention of the nation was naturally concentrated on the work of political and social restoration. What shape the new England would take, what was to be its political or religious form, was still uncertain. It was still doubtful which political or religious party had really the upper hand. The show of power lay as yet with the Presbyterians. It was by the Presbyterians that the chief part in the Restoration had in fact been played; and it was the Presbyterians who still almost exclusively possessed the magistracy and all local authority. The first ministry which Charles ventured to form bore on it the marks of a compromise between this powerful party and their old opponents. Its most influential member indeed was Sir Edward Hyde, the adviser of the King during his exile, who soon became Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor. Lord Southampton, a steady royalist, accepted the post of Lord Treasurer; and the devotion of Ormond was rewarded with a dukedom and the dignity of Lord Steward. But the Presbyterian interest was represented by Monk, who remained Lord-General of the army with the title of Duke of Albemarle; and though the King's brother, James, Duke of York, was made Lord Admiral, the administration of the fleet was virtually in the hands of one of Cromwell's followers, Montagu, the new Earl of Sandwich. An old Puritan, Lord Say and Sele, was made Lord Privy Seal. Sir Ashley Cooper, a leading member of the same party, was rewarded for his activity in bringing about the Restoration by a barony and the office of

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vention.

Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of the two Secretaries of State, the one, Nicholas, was a devoted Royalist; the other, Morice, was a steady Presbyterian. Of the thirty members of the Privy Council, twelve had borne arms against the King.

It was clear that such a ministry was hardly likely to lend itself to a mere policy of reaction, and the temper of the new Government therefore fell fairly in with the temper of the Convention when that body, after declaring itself a Parliament, proceeded to consider the measures which were requisite for a settlement of the nation. The Convention had been chosen under ordinances which excluded royalist "Malignants" from the right of voting; and the bulk of its members were men of Presbyterian sympathies, loyalist to the core, but as adverse to despotism as the Long Parliament itself. In its earlier days a member who asserted that those who had fought against the King were as guilty as those who cut off his head was sternly rebuked from the Chair. The first measure which was undertaken by the House, the Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion for all offences committed during the recent troubles, showed at once the moderate character of the Commons. In the punishment of the regicides indeed a Presbyterian might well be as zealous as a Cavalier. In spite of a Proclamation issued in the first days of his return, which virtually promised mercy to all the judges of the late King who surrendered themselves to justice, Charles pressed for revenge on those whom he regarded as his father's murderers, and the Lords went hotly with the King. It is to the credit of the Commons that they steadily resisted the cry for blood. By the original provisions of the Bill of Oblivion and Indemnity only seven of the living regicides were excluded from pardon; and though the rise of royalist fervour during the three months in which the bill was under discussion forced the House in the end to leave almost all to the course of justice, yet a clause which made a special Act of

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Parliament necessary for the execution of those who had surrendered under the Proclamation protected the lives of most of them. Twenty-eight of the King's Judges were in the end arraigned at the bar of a Court specially convened for their trial, but only thirteen were executed, and only one of these, General Harrison, had played any conspicuous part in the rebellion. Twenty others, who had been prominent in what were now called "the troubles" of the past twenty years, were declared incapable of holding office under the State: and by an unjustifiable clause which was introduced into the Act before its final adoption Sir Harry Vane and General Lambert, though they had taken no part in the King's death, were specially exempted from the general pardon.

Settle-
ment of
the
Nation.

In dealing with the questions of property which arose from the confiscations and transfers of estates during the Civil Wars the Convention met with greater difficulties. No opposition was made to the resumption of all Crown-lands by the State, but the Convention desired to protect the rights of those who had purchased Church property and of those who were in actual possession of private estates which had been confiscated by the Long Parliament or by the government which succeeded it. The bills however which they prepared for this purpose were delayed by the artifices of Hyde; and at the close of the Session the bishops and the evicted royalists quietly re-entered into the occupation of their old possessions. The royalists indeed were far from being satisfied with this summary confiscation. Fines and sequestrations had impoverished all the steady adherents of the royal cause, and had driven many of them to forced sales of their estates; and a demand was made for compensation for their losses and the cancelling of these sales. Without such provisions, said the frenzied Cavaliers, the bill would be "a Bill of Indemnity for the King's enemies, and of Oblivion for his friends." But here the Convention stood firm. All transfers of property by sale were recognized as valid, and all claims

of compensation for losses by sequestration were barred by the Act.

From the settlement of the nation the Convention passed to the settlement of the relations between the nation and the Crown. So far was the constitutional work of the Long Parliament from being undone that its more important measures were silently accepted as the base of future government. Not a voice demanded the restoration of the Star Chamber or of monopolies or of the Court of High Commission; no one disputed the justice of the condemnation of Ship-money or the assertion of the sole right of Parliament to grant supplies to the Crown. The Militia indeed was placed in the King's hands; but the army was disbanded, though Charles was permitted to keep a few regiments for his guard. The revenue was fixed at £1,200,000, and this sum was granted to the King for life, a grant which might have been perilous for freedom had not the taxes voted to supply the sum fallen constantly below this estimate while the current expenses of the Crown, even in time of peace, greatly exceeded it. But even for this grant a heavy price was exacted. Though the rights of the Crown over lands held, as the bulk of English estates were held, in military tenure had ceased to be of any great pecuniary value, they were indirectly a source of considerable power. The rights of wardship and of marriage above all enabled the sovereign to exercise a galling pressure on every landed proprietor in his social and domestic concerns. Under Elizabeth the right of wardship had been used to secure the education of all Catholic minors in the Protestant faith; and under James and his successor the charge of minors had been granted to Court favourites or sold in open market to the highest bidder. But the real value of these rights to the Crown lay in the political pressure which it was able to exert through them on the country gentry. A squire was naturally eager to buy the good will of a sovereign who might soon be the guardian of his daughter and the

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administrator of his estate. But the same motives which made the Crown cling to this prerogative made the Parliament anxious to do away with it. Its efforts to bring this about under James the First had been foiled by the King's stubborn resistance; but the long interruption of these rights during the troubles made their revival almost impossible at the Restoration. One of the first acts therefore of the Convention was to free the country gentry by abolishing the claims of the Crown to reliefs and wardship, purveyance, and pre-emption, and by the conversion of lands held till then in chivalry into lands held in common socage. In lieu of his rights Charles accepted a grant of £100,000 a year; a sum which it was originally purposed to raise by a tax on the lands thus exempted from feudal exactions; but which was provided for in the end with less justice by a general excise.

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Church.

Successful as the Convention had been in effecting a settlement of political matters it failed in bringing about a settlement of the Church. In his proclamation from Breda Charles had promised to respect liberty of conscience, and to assent to any Acts of Parliament which should be presented to him for its security. The Convention was in the main Presbyterian; but it soon became plain that the continuance of a purely Presbyterian system was impossible. "The generality of the people," wrote Sharpe, a shrewd Scotch observer, from London, "are doting after Prelacy and the Service-book." The Convention however still hoped for some modified form of Episcopalian government which would enable the bulk of the Puritan party to remain within the Church. A large part of the existing clergy indeed were Independents, and for these no compromise with Episcopacy was possible: but the greater number were moderate Presbyterians who were ready "for fear of worse" not only to submit to such a plan of Church government as Archbishop Usher had proposed, a plan in which the bishop was only the president of a diocesan board of presbyters, but to accept the Liturgy itself with

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a few amendments and the omission of "superstitious practices." It was to a compromise of this kind that the King himself leant at the beginning, and a Royal declaration announced his approval of the Puritan demands, limited the authority of the bishops by the counsel of their presbyters, and promised a revision of the Book of Common Prayer. The royal declaration was read at a conference of the two parties, and with it a petition from the Independents praying for religious liberty. The King proposed to grant the prayer of the petition, not for the Independents only but for all Christians. Dexterous as the move was, it at once spread alarm. The silence of the bishops, the protest of Baxter, proved that on the point of tolerating the Catholics all were at one. In itself however the declaration satisfied the Puritan party, and one of their leaders, Dr. Reynolds, accepted a bishopric on the strength of it. But the King's disappointment at the check given to his plans showed itself in the new attitude of the government when a bill was introduced into the House of Commons by Sir Matthew Hale to turn the declaration into a law. The opposition of the Episcopalian party was secretly encouraged by the royalist section of the ministry, and the bill thrown out by a small majority. A fresh conference was promised, but in the absence of any Parliamentary action the Episcopal party boldly availed themselves of their legal rights. The ejected clergy who still remained alive entered again into their parsonages, the bishops returned to their sees, and the dissolution of the Convention-Parliament destroyed the last hope of an ecclesiastical compromise.

The tide of loyalty had in fact been rising fast during its session, and its influence was already seen in a shameful outrage wrought under the very orders of the Convention itself. The bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were torn from their graves and hung on gibbets at Tyburn, while those of Pym and Blake were cast out of Westminster Abbey into St. Margaret's churchyard. But it was only

The Constitutional
Royalists.

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 The end of 1660 that the new political temper made itself
 Restoration. vigorously felt. For the first time during twenty years
 1660- half England found itself able to go to the poll. From
 1667. the outset of the war all who had taken part on the
 royalist side had been disfranchised as "malignants," and
 this disfranchisement had been rigorously enforced even
 in the elections to the Convention. But "malignity"
 had now ceased to be a crime, and the voters so long
 deprived of all share in the suffrage, vicars, country gen-
 tlemen, farmers, with the whole body of the Catholics,
 rushed again to the poll. Their temper, as might be ex-
 pected, was one of vengeance on the men who had held
 them down so long. In counties and towns alike the zeal
 for Church and King, the two causes for which the voters
 had suffered, swept all hope of moderation or compromise
 before it. The ruling impulse was to get utterly rid of the
 old representatives. The Presbyterians, dominant in the
 Convention, sank in the Cavalier Parliament, as that of
 1661 was called, to a handful of fifty members.

The new House of Commons was made up for the most
 part of young men, of men, that is, who had but a faint
 memory of the Stuart tyranny under which their child-
 hood had been spent, but who had a keen memory of
 living from manhood beneath the tyranny of the Common-
 wealth. They had seen their fathers driven from the
 justice-bench, driven from the polling-booth, half-beggared
 and imprisoned for no other cause but their loyalty to the
 King. They had seen the family oaks felled and the
 family plate sent to the melting-pot to redeem their estates
 from the pitiless hands of the committee at Goldsmith's
 Hall. They had themselves been brought like poachers
 before the justices for a horse-race or a cock-fight. At
 every breath of a rising a squad of the New Model had
 quartered itself in the manor-house and a warrant from
 the Major-general of the district had cleared the stables.
 Nor was this all. The same tyranny which pressed on

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their social and political life had pressed on their religious
 life too. The solemn petitions of the Book of Common
 Prayer, the words which had rung like sweet chimes in
 their ears from their first childhood, had been banned from
 every village church as accursed things. It had been only
 by stealth and at home that the cross could be signed
 on the brow of the babe whom the squire brought
 to be christened. Hardly by stealth had it been possi-
 ble to bury their dead with the words of pathetic hope
 which have so often brought comfort to the ears of
 mourners.

And now the young squires felt that their time had
 come. The Puritan, the Presbyterian, the Commonwealths-
 man, all were at their feet. Their very bearing was that of
 wild revolt against the Puritan past. To a staid observer,
 Roger Pepys, they seemed a following of "the most profane,
 swearing fellows that ever I heard in my life." Their whole
 policy appeared to be dictated by a passionate spirit of
 reaction. They would drive the Presbyterians from the
 bench and the polling-booth as the Presbyterians had driven
 them. They would make belief in a Commonwealth
 as much a sign of "malignity" as their enemies had made
 belief in a King. They would have no military rule:
 they hated indeed the very name of a standing army.
 They were hot royalists and they were hot churchmen.
 The old tyranny of the bishops was forgotten, the old
 jealousy of the clergy set aside in the memory of a
 common suffering. The oppressors of the parson had been
 driven the one from his parsonage had driven the other
 from his manor-house. Both had been branded with the
 same charge of malignity. Both had been robbed alike
 of the same privileges of citizenship. Both had suffered
 together, and the new Parliament was resolved that both
 should triumph together. For the first time since the
 Reformation the English gentry were ardent not for King
 only but for Church and King.

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The zeal of the Parliament at its outset therefore far outran that of Charles or his ministers. Though it confirmed the other acts of its predecessor, the Convention, it could with difficulty be brought to confirm the Act of Indemnity. The Commons pressed for the prosecution of Vane. Vane was protected alike by the spirit of the law and by the King's pledge to the Convention that, even if convicted of treason, he would not suffer him to be sent to the block. But he was now brought to trial on the charge of treason against a King "kept out of his royal authority by traitors and rebels," and his spirited defence served as an excuse for his execution. "He is too dangerous a man to let live," Charles wrote with characteristic coolness, "if we can safely put him out of the way." But the new members were yet better churchmen than loyalists. At the opening of their session they ordered every member to receive the communion, and the League and Covenant to be solemnly burnt by the common hangman in Westminster Hall. The bill which excluded the bishops from their seats in the House of Lords was repealed. The conference at the Savoy between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians broke up in anger, and the few alterations made in the Liturgy were made with a view to disgust rather than to conciliate the Puritan party.

Claren-
don.

In spite of these outbursts however it would be unjust to look on the temper of the new Parliament as a mere temper of revenge. Its wish was in the main to restore the constitutional system which the civil war had violently interrupted. The royalist party, as we have seen, had no sort of sympathy with the policy of the early Stuarts. Their notions and their aims were not those of Laud and Strafford but of the group of constitutional loyalists who had followed Falkland in his break with the Long Parliament in 1642. And of that group by a singular fortune the most active and conspicuous member now filled the chief place in the counsels of the King. Edward Hyde had joined Charles the First before the outbreak of the war,

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he had become his Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was to his pen that the bulk of the royal manifestoes were attributed. He had passed with the young Prince of Wales into exile, and had remained the counsellor of Charles the Second during the long years which preceded his return. His faithfulness had been amply rewarded. He was now Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor; and his influence in the royal council, which had been great from the first, became supreme when the temper of the new Parliament shattered the hopes of his Presbyterian opponents there. But his aim was simply to carry out the policy he had clung to with Falkland. He was a lawyer by breeding, and his theory of the State was a lawyer's theory. He looked on the English constitution, not as the sum of political forces which were still in process of development, but as a mass of fixed and co-ordinated institutions whose form and mutual relations had been settled in some distant past. He had opposed the Stuart tyranny because—as he held—it had broken down this constitution to the profit of the Crown. He worked with the men of the Long Parliament in what he regarded as the work of restoring it; he left them the moment that he fancied they were themselves about to break it down to the profit of the People. Years of exile had only hardened his ideas. He came back with the fixed resolve to hold the State together at the exact point where the first reforms of the Long Parliament had left it. The power and prerogative of the Crown, the authority of the Church, were to be jealously preserved, but they were to be preserved by the free will and conviction of the Parliament. It was on this harmonious co-operation of these three great institutions that Clarendon's system hung. Its importance to future times lay in his regarding Parliament and the Church, not as mere accidents or checks in the system of English government, but as essential parts of it, parts which were as needful for its healthy working as the Crown itself, and through which the power of the Crown was to

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be exercised. Wholly to realize such a conception it was necessary that the Parliament should be politically, the Church religiously, representatives of the whole nation.

The first of Clarendon's assumptions was not only a fact but a far greater fact than he imagined. Hence it came about that his assembly of the Parliament year after year, and the steady way in which he used it to do the Crown's work by setting its stamp on every great political measure, became of the highest importance in our constitutional development. The second was a fiction, for half England had passed from the grasp of the Church, but it was to make it a fact that Clarendon buckled himself to a desperate struggle with Nonconformity. It was under his guidance that the Parliament turned to the carrying out of that principle of uniformity in Church as well as in State on which the minister was resolved. The chief obstacle to such a policy lay in the Presbyterians, and the strongholds of the Presbyterians were the corporations of the boroughs. In many of the boroughs the corporation actually returned the borough members—in all they exercised a powerful influence on their election. To drive the Presbyterians therefore from municipal posts was to weaken if not to destroy the Presbyterian party in the House of Commons. It was with a view of bringing about this object that the Cavalier Parliament passed a severe Corporation Act, which required as a condition of entering on any municipal office a reception of the communion according to the rites of the Anglican Church, a renunciation of the League and Covenant, and a declaration that it was unlawful on any grounds to take up arms against the King. The attempt was only partially successful, and test and oath were taken after a while by men who regarded both simply as insults to their religious and political convictions. But if Clarendon was foiled in his effort to secure political uniformity by excluding the Presbyterian party from any connexion with the govern-

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Act of
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ment of the State he seemed for the time more successful in his attempt to secure a religious uniformity by their exclusion from the Church.

An effectual blow was dealt at the Puritans in 1662 by the renewal of the Act of Uniformity. Not only was the use of the Prayer-book and the Prayer-book only enforced in all public worship, but an unfeigned consent and assent was demanded from every minister of the Church to all which was contained in it; while for the first time since the Reformation all orders save those conferred by the hands of bishops were legally disallowed. To give a political stamp to the new measure the declaration exacted from corporations, that it was unlawful in any case to take up arms against the Crown, was exacted from the clergy, and a pledge was required that they would seek to make no change in Church or State. It was in vain that Ashley opposed the bill fiercely in the Lords, that the peers pleaded for pensions to the ejected ministers and for the exemption of schoolmasters from the necessity of subscription, and that even Clarendon, who felt that the King's word was at stake, pressed for the insertion of clauses enabling the Crown to grant dispensations from its provisions. Every suggestion of compromise was rejected by the Commons; and Charles whose aim was to procure a toleration for the Catholics by allowing the Presbyterians to feel the pressure of persecution at last assented to the bill.

The bill passed in May, but its execution was deferred till August; and in the interval the Presbyterian party in the royal Council struggled hard to obtain from the King a suspension of its provisions by the exercise of his prerogative. Charles had promised this, but the bishops were resolute to enforce the law; and on St. Bartholomew's Day, August the 24th, the last day allowed for compliance with its requirements, nearly two thousand rectors and vicars, or about a fifth of the English clergy, were driven from their parishes as Nonconformists. No such sweeping

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alteration in the religious aspect of the Church had ever been seen before. The ecclesiastical changes of the Reformation had been brought about with little change in the clergy itself. Even the severities of the High Commission under Elizabeth ended in the expulsion of a few hundreds. If Laud had gone zealously to work in emptying Puritan pulpits his zeal had been to a great extent foiled by the restrictions of the law and by the growth of Puritan sentiment in the clergy as a whole. A far wider change had been brought about in the expulsion of royalist clergy from their benefices during the Civil War; but the change had been gradual, and had been at least ostensibly wrought for the most part on political or moral rather than on religious grounds. The parsons expelled were expelled as "malignants," or as unfitted for their office by idleness or vice or inability to preach. But the change wrought by St. Bartholomew's Day was a distinctly religious change, and it was a change which in its suddenness and completeness stood utterly alone. The rectors and vicars who were driven out were the most learned and the most active of their order. The bulk of the great livings throughout the country were in their hands. They stood at the head of the London clergy, as the London clergy stood in general repute at the head of their class throughout England. They occupied the higher posts at the two Universities. No English divine save Jeremy Taylor rivalled Howe as a preacher. No parson was so renowned a controversialist or so indefatigable a parish priest as Baxter. And behind these men stood a fifth of the whole body of the clergy, men whose zeal and labour had diffused throughout the country a greater appearance of piety and religion than it had ever displayed before.

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results.*

But the expulsion of these men was far more to the Church of England than the loss of their individual services. It was the definite expulsion of a great party which from the time of the Reformation had played the most active

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and popular part in the life of the Church. It was the close of an effort which had been going on ever since Elizabeth's accession to bring the English Communion into closer relations with the Reformed Communions of the Continent and into greater harmony with the religious instincts of the nation at large. The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the Churches of the Christian world. The Reformation had severed it irretrievably from those which still clung to the obedience of the Papacy. By its rejection of all but episcopal orders the Act of Uniformity severed it as irretrievably from the general body of the Protestant Churches whether Lutheran or Reformed. And while thus cut off from all healthy religious communion with the world without it sank into immobility within. With the expulsion of the Puritan clergy all change, all efforts after reform, all national development, suddenly stopped. From that time to this the Episcopal Church has been unable to meet the varying spiritual needs of its adherents by any modifications of its government or its worship. It stands alone among all the religious bodies of Western Christendom in its failure through two hundred years to devise a single new service of prayer or of praise.

But if the issues of St. Bartholomew's Day have been harmful to the spiritual life of the English Church they have been in the highest degree advantageous to the cause of religious liberty. At the Restoration religious freedom seemed again to have been lost. Only the Independents and a few despised sects, such as the Quakers, upheld the right of every man to worship God according to the bidding of his own conscience. The bulk of the Puritan Party, with the Presbyterians at its head, was at one with its opponents in desiring a uniformity of worship, if not of belief, throughout the land. Had the two great parties within the Church held together their weight would have been almost irresistible. Fortunately the great severance of St. Bartholomew's Day drove out the Presbyterians

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from the Church to which they clung, and forced them into a general union with sects which they had hated till then almost as bitterly as the bishops themselves. A common persecution soon blended the Nonconformists into one. Persecution broke down before the numbers, the wealth, and the political weight of the new sectarians; and the Church for the first time in its history found itself confronted with an organized body of Dissenters without its pale. The impossibility of crushing such a body as this wrested from English statesmen the first legal recognition of freedom of worship in the Toleration Act; their rapid growth in later times has by degrees stripped the Church of almost all the exclusive privileges which it enjoyed as a religious body, and now threatens what remains of its official connection with the state. With these remoter consequences however we are not as yet concerned. It is enough to note here that with the Act of Uniformity and the expulsion of the Puritan clergy a new element in our religious and political history, the element of Dissent, the influence of the Nonconformist churches, comes first into play.

Charles
and
Claren-
don.

The sudden outbreak and violence of the persecution, the breaking up of conventicles, the imprisonment of those who were found worshipping in them, turned the disappointment of the Presbyterians into despair. Many were for retiring to Holland, others proposed a general flight to New England and the American colonies. Among the Baptists and Independents there was vague talk of an appeal to arms. So threatening indeed did the attitude of the sectaries become that Clarendon was anxious to provide himself with men and money and above all with foreign aid for such a struggle, should it come. Different indeed as were the aims of the King and his Chancellor the course of events drew them inevitably together. If Charles desired the friendship of France as a support in any possible struggle with the Parliament Clarendon desired it as a support in the possible struggle with the Nonconformists. The first

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step in this French policy had been the marriage with Catharine of Braganza; the second was the surrender of Dunkirk. The maintenance of the garrison at Dunkirk was a heavy drag upon the royal treasury, and a proposal for its sale to Spain, which was made by Lord Sandwich in council, was seized by Charles and Clarendon as a means of opening a bargain with France. To France the profit was immense. Not only was a port gained in the Channel which served during the next hundred years as a haunt for privateers in every war between the two powers, but the withdrawal of the English garrison at the close of 1662 from a port which necessarily drew England into every contest between France and Spain freed the hands of Lewis for the stroke he was patiently planning against the Low Countries. Lewis however proved a shrewd bargainer, and not a half of the sum originally demanded as its price found its way into the royal treasury. But the money was accepted as a pledge of the close connexion which was to bind the two crowns together. Charles declared the cession to be "one of the greatest proofs he could give of his friendship for the French King," and the Duke of York pressed the bargain with assurances that his strongest desire, like that of his brother, was "to unite our interests with those of France." Clarendon was as desirous of such a union as his master. In his eyes the friendship of France, the money, the force placed in his hands by the return of the garrison of Dunkirk to England, were so many safeguards against the outbreak of rebellion which his policy had provoked.

But he had reckoned without Charles, and the time was come when the King was to show how widely his temper and aim differed from those of his Chancellor. Charles had no taste for civil war, nor had he the slightest wish to risk his throne in securing the supremacy of the Church. His aim was to use the strife between the two great bodies of Protestant religionists so as to secure toleration for the Catholics and revive at the same time his prerogative of

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dispensing with the execution of laws. At the close of 1662 therefore he suddenly broke from the policy of Clarendon and laid his plans for toleration before the Presbyterian party who were struggling against the Chancellor in the royal council. Of that party Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley, was now in influence, though not in rank, the chief. Every step in his career had brought out the boldness, the self-reliance, the versatility and readiness of resource which distinguished his character. In mere boyhood he had saved his estate from the greed of his guardians by boldly appearing in person for protection to Noy, who was then attorney-general. As an undergraduate at Oxford he organized a rebellion of the freshmen against the oppressive customs which were enforced by the senior men of his college, and succeeded in abolishing them. At eighteen he was a member of the Short Parliament. On the outbreak of the Civil War he took part with the King; but in the midst of the royal successes he foresaw the ruin of the royal cause, passed to the Parliament, attached himself to the fortunes of Cromwell, and became member of the Council of State. A temporary disgrace during the last years of the Protectorate only quickened him to a restless hatred which did much to bring about its fall. His bitter invectives against the dead Protector, his intrigues with Monk, and the active part which he took in the King's recall, were rewarded at the Restoration with a peerage and with promotion to a foremost share in the royal councils.

Ashley was then a man of forty, and under the Commonwealth he had been famous in Dryden's contemptuous phrase as "the loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train;" but he was no sooner a minister of Charles than he flung himself into the debauchery of the Court with an ardour which surprised even his master. "You are the wickedest dog in England!" laughed the King at some unscrupulous jest of his counsellor's. "Of a subject, Sir, I believe I am!" was the unabashed reply. But the debauchery of

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Ashley was simply a mask. He was in fact temperate by nature and habit, and his ill-health rendered any great excess impossible. Men soon found that the courtier who lounged in Lady Castlemaine's boudoir, or drank and jested with Sedley and Buckingham, was a diligent and able man of business. "He is a man," says the puzzled Pepys, three years after the Restoration, "of great business and yet of pleasure and dissipation too." His rivals were as envious of the ease and mastery with which he dealt with questions of finance as of the "nimble wit" which won the favour of the King. Even in later years his industry earned the grudging praise of his enemies. Dryden owned that as Chancellor he was "swift to despatch and easy of access," and wondered at the fevered activity which "refused his age the needful hours of rest." His activity indeed was the more wonderful that his health was utterly broken. An accident in early days left behind it an abiding weakness whose traces were seen in the furrows which seamed his long pale face, in the feebleness of his health, and the nervous tremor which shook his puny frame. The "pigmy body" was "fretted to decay" by the "fiery soul" within it. But pain and weakness brought with them no sourness of spirit. Ashley was attacked more unscrupulously than any statesman save Walpole; but Burnet, who did not love him, owns that he was never bitter or angry in speaking of his assailants. Even the wit with which he crushed them was commonly good-humoured. "When will you have done preaching?" a bishop murmured testily, as he was speaking in the House of Peers. "When I am a bishop, my Lord!" was the laughing reply.

As a statesman Ashley not only stood high among his contemporaries from his wonderful readiness and industry, but he stood far above them in his scorn of personal profit. Even Dryden, while raking together every fault in his character, owns that his hands were clean. As a political leader his position was to modern eyes odd enough. In

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Policy.

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religion he was at most a Deist, with some fanciful notions "that after death our souls lived in stars," and his life was that of a debauchee. But Deist and debauchee as he was he remained the representative of the Presbyterian and Non-conformist party in the Royal Council. He was the steady and vehement advocate of toleration, but his advocacy was based on purely political grounds. He saw that persecution would fail to bring back the Dissenters to the Church, and that the effort to recall them only left the country disunited. He saw too that such a disunion exposed English liberty to invasion from the Crown, while it robbed England herself of all influence in Europe at a time when her influence alone could effectually check the ambition of France. The one means of uniting Churchmen and Dissidents was by a policy of toleration, but in the temper of England after the Restoration he saw no hope of obtaining toleration save from the King. Wit, debauchery, rapidity in the despatch of business, were all therefore used as a means to gain influence over the King, and to secure him as a friend in the struggle which Ashley carried on against the intolerance of Clarendon.

The first
Declara-
tion of
In-
dulgence.

Charles, as we have seen, had his own game to play, and his own reasons for protecting Ashley during his vehement struggle against the Test and Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, and the persecution of the Dissidents. But the struggle had been fruitless, and the only chance—as it seemed to Ashley—of securing toleration was to receive it on the King's own terms. It was with the assent therefore of the Presbyterian party in the Council that Charles issued in December a royal proclamation which expressed the King's resolve to exempt from the penalties of the Acts which had been passed "those who living peaceably do not conform themselves thereunto through scruple and tenderness of misguided conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way." The desire for toleration had in fact not only overcome their dread of Catholicism, but even blinded them to the

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political dangers of a revival of the dispensing power. The indulgence applied equally to Catholics as to Protestants; it was in itself a bold assertion of the royal prerogative of suspending the execution of the law. The Presbyterian statesmen indeed aimed at giving the dispensing power a legal basis. A bill introduced by Lords Ashley and Roberts in the opening of 1663, in redemption of a pledge contained in the declaration itself, gave Charles the power to dispense not only with the provisions of the Act of Uniformity but with the penalties provided by all laws which enforced religious conformity or which imposed religious tests. But the policy of Charles as of Ashley broke instantly down before the good sense as well as the religious passion of the people at large. If the Presbyterian leaders in the council had stooped to accept the aid of the declaration, the bulk of the Dissidents had no mind to have their grievances used as a means of procuring by a side wind toleration for Roman Catholics, or of building up again that dispensing power which the civil wars had thrown down. The Churchmen on the other hand with the bishops at their head were resolute in opposition. Ever since the issue of the Declaration of Indulgence the hatred felt by the Churchmen for the Dissidents had been embittered by suspicions of a secret league between the Dissidents and the Catholics in which the King was taking part. The Houses therefore struck simultaneously at both their opponents. They forced Charles by an address to withdraw his pledge of toleration. They then extorted from him a proclamation for the banishment of all Catholic priests, and followed this up by a Conventicle Act, which punished with fine, imprisonment, and transportation on a third offence all persons who met in greater number than five for any religious worship save that of the Common Prayer.

What added to the sting of this defeat was the open opposition which Clarendon had offered to his master's scheme in Parliament. From that moment Charles resolved

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on his minister's ruin. But Clarendon's position was too strong to be easily shaken. Hated by the Catholics and the Dissenters, opposed in the Council itself by Ashley and the Presbyterian leaders, opposed in the Court by the King's mistress, Lady Castlemaine, as well as by the supple and adroit Henry Bennet, a creature of the King's who began to play a foremost part in politics, Clarendon was still strong in his long and intimate connexion with the King's affairs, his alliance with the royal house through the marriage of his daughter, Anne Hyde, with the Duke of York, in his untiring industry, his wide capacity for business, above all in the support of the Church and the confidence of the royalist and orthodox House of Commons. To the Commons and the Church he was only bound the closer by the hatred of Catholics and Nonconformists or by the futile attempts at impeachment which were made by the Catholic Earl of Bristol in the summer of 1663. The "Declaration" indeed had strengthened Clarendon's position. It had identified his policy of persecution with the maintenance of constitutional liberty, and had thrown on Ashley and his opponents the odium of an attempt to set up again the dispensing power and of betraying, as it was thought, the interests of Protestantism into the hands of Rome. Never in fact had Clarendon's power seemed stronger than in 1664; and the only result of the attempt to shake his system of intolerance was an increase of persecution. Of the sufferings of the expelled clergy one of their number, Richard Baxter, has given us an account. "Many hundreds of them with their wives and children had neither house nor bread. . . . Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance, to help them out of prisons or to maintain them there. Though they were as frugal as possible they could hardly live; some lived on little more than brown bread and water, many had but eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family, so that a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in

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six weeks' time; their allowance could scarce afford them bread and cheese. One went to plow six days and preached on the Lord's Day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood." But poverty was the least of their sufferings. They were jeered at by the players. They were hooted through the streets by the mob. "Many of the ministers being afraid to lay down their ministry after they had been ordained to it, preached to such as would hear them in fields and private houses, till they were apprehended and cast into gaols, where many of them perished." They were excommunicated in the Bishop's Court or fined for nonattendance at church; and a crowd of informers grew up who made a trade of detecting the meetings they held at midnight. Alleyn, the author of the well-known "Alarm to the Unconverted," died at thirty-six from the sufferings he endured in Taunton Gaol. Vavasour Powell, the apostle of Wales, spent the eleven years which followed the Restoration in prisons at Shrewsbury, Southsea, and Cardiff, till he perished in the Fleet.

The success however of this experiment in the repression of religious opinion rested mainly on the absence of any disturbing influences from without; and in the midst of his triumph over his opponents at home Clarendon was watching anxiously the growth of a quarrel which threatened war with the Dutch. The old commercial jealousy between the two rival merchant nations, which had been lulled in 1662 by a formal treaty of peace, but which still lived on in petty squabbles at sea, was embittered by the cession of Bombay—a port which gave England an entry into the profitable trade with India—as well as by the establishment of a West Indian Company in London which opened a traffic with the Gold Coast of Africa, and brought back from Guinea the gold from which our first "guineas" were struck. In both countries there was a general irritation which vented itself in cries for war, and in the session of 1664 the English Parliament presented

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an address to the Crown praying for the exaction of redress for wrongs done by the Dutch to English merchants. But the squabble was of long standing, and there was nothing to threaten any immediate strife. Charles himself indeed shrank from wars which he foresaw would leave him at the mercy of his Parliament; and Clarendon with Ormond, the bishops, and the whole Church party, were conscious that the maintenance of peace was needful for their system of religious repression. The quarrel therefore would have dragged on in endless recriminations had not the restless hatred of the Chancellor's opponents seen in it a means of bringing about the end in which they had as yet been foiled. Bennet and the Court, Ashley and the Presbyterian party in the Council, Bristol and the Catholics, foresaw that the pressure of such a war, the burdens it would bring with it, and the supplies for which he would be driven to ask, would soon ruin the Chancellor's popularity with the Commons. Stripped of their support, it was easy to bring about his fall and clear the stage for fresh efforts after a religious toleration. The popular temper made their task of forcing on a war an easy one. The King was won over, partly by playing on his old resentment at the insults he had suffered from Holland during his exile, partly by his hope that the suffering which war would bring on Holland would end in the overthrow of the aristocratic republicans who had governed the United Provinces ever since the fall of the House of Orange and in the restoration of his young nephew, William of Orange, to the old influence of his family over the State. Such a restoration would not only repay the debt of gratitude which the royalist cause owed to the efforts of William's father in its support, but would remove the dread which the English government never ceased to feel of the encouragement which the Dissidents at home derived from the mere existence close by of a presbyterian and republican government in Holland. Against the combined pressure of the King, the people, and his enemies in the cabinet and the court, Clarendon

was unable to contend. Attacks on the Dutch settlements on the Gold Coast and the American coast made war inevitable; a fleet was manned; and at the close of 1664 the Parliament in a fit of unwonted enthusiasm voted two millions and a half for the coming struggle.

The war at sea which followed was a war of giants. No such mighty fleets have ever disputed the sovereignty of the seas, nor have any naval battles equalled the encounters of the two nations in dogged and obstinate fighting. In the spring of 1665 the two fleets, each a hundred ships strong, mustered in the channel, the Dutch under Opdam, the English under the Duke of York. Their first battle off Lowestoft, obstinate as all the engagements between the two nations, ended in a victory for the English, a victory due chiefly to the superiority of their guns and to a shot which blew up the flag-ship of the Dutch Admiral in the midst of the engagement. But the thought of triumph was soon forgotten in a terrible calamity which now fell on London. In six months a hundred thousand Londoners died of the Plague which broke out in May in the crowded streets of the capital, and which drove the Parliament from London to assemble in October at Oxford. To the dismay caused by the Plague was added the growing irritation at the increasing pressure of the war and a sense of the grave dangers into which the struggle with Holland was plunging the country both at home and abroad. The enormous grant which had been made at the outset for three years was already spent and a fresh supply had to be granted. But hard and costly as the Dutch war had proved a far graver and costlier struggle seemed opening in its train. The war was a serious stumbling-block in the way of the French projects. Holland on the strength of old treaties, England on the strength of her new friendship, alike called on Lewis for aid; but to give aid to either was to run the risk of throwing the other on the aid of the House of Austria, and of building up the league which could alone check Franco in its

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designs upon Spain. Only peace could keep the European states disunited, and it was on their disunion that Lewis counted for success in his design of seizing Flanders, a design which was now all but ripe for execution. At the outset of the war therefore he offered his mediation, and suggested the terms of a compromise. But his attempt was fruitless, and the defeat off Lowestoft forced him to more effective action. He declared himself forced to give aid to the Dutch; though he cautiously restricted his help to the promise of a naval reinforcement. But the chief work of his negotiators was to prevent any extension of the struggle. Sweden and Brandenburg, from both of which powers Charles counted on support, were held in check by the intervention of France; and the Bishop of Münster, whom an English subsidy had roused to an attack on his Dutch neighbours, was forced by the influence of Lewis to withdraw his troops. Sir William Temple, the English ambassador at Brussels, strove to enlist Spain on the side of England by promising to bring about a treaty between that country and Portugal which would free its hands for an attack on Lewis, and so anticipate his plans for an attack under more favourable circumstances on herself. But Lewis knew how to play on the Catholic bigotry of Spain, and the English offers were set aside.

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and
France.

Lewis thus succeeded in isolating England and in narrowing the war within the limits of a struggle at sea, a struggle in which the two great sea-powers could only weaken one another to the profit of his own powerful navy. But his intervention was far from scaring England into peace. The old hatred of France had quickened the English people to an early perception of the dangers which were to spring from French ambition; and as early as 1661 the London mob backed the Spanish ambassador in a street squabble for precedence with the ambassador of France. "We do all naturally love the Spanish," Pepys comments on this at the time, "and hate the French." The marriage of Catharine, the sale of Dunkirk, were taken as signs of

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the growth of a French influence over English policy, and the jealousy and suspicion they had aroused were seen in the reception with which the Parliament met the announcement of Lewis's hostility. No sooner had the words fallen from Charles's lips than "there was a great noise in the Parliament," writes the French statesman Louvois, "to show the joy of the two Houses at the prospect of a fight with us." But even the warlike temper of the Parliament could not blind it to the new weight which was given to the struggle by this intervention of France. Above all it woke men to the dangers at home. The policy of Clarendon had broken England into two nations. Whatever might be the attitude of Monk or Ashley in the royal closet the sympathies of the Nonconformists as a whole could not fail to be opposed to a war with the Dutch; and as Charles was striving with some show of success to rouse the Orange party in the States to active opposition against the dominant republicans, so the Dutch statesmen summoned the banished regicides to Holland, and dreamed of a landing in England which would bring about a general rising of the Dissidents against Charles. The less scrupulous diplomacy of Lewis availed itself of every element of opposition, called Algernon Sidney to Paris and supplied him with money as a possible means of rousing the English republicans, while it corresponded with the Presbyterians in Scotland and the hardly less bitter Catholics of Ireland.

The dread of internal revolt was quickened by the new attitude of resistance taken by the Nonconformists. When the clergy fled from London at the appearance of the Plague, their pulpits were boldly occupied in open defiance of the law by the ministers who had been ejected from them. The terror and hatred roused by this revival of a foe that seemed to have been crushed was seen in the Five Mile Act, which completed in 1665 the code of persecution. By its provisions every clergyman who had been driven out by the Act of Uniformity was called on to swear that he held it unlawful under any pretext to take up arms

The
Religious
Persecution.

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 The any alteration of government in Church or State." In case
 Restora- of refusal he was forbidden to go within five miles of any
 tion. borough or of any place where he had been wont to
 1660 minister. As the main body of the Nonconformists be-
 1667. longed to the city and trading classes, the effect of this
 measure was to rob them of any religious teaching at all.
 But the tide of religious intolerance was now slowly
 ebbing and, bigoted as the House was, a motion to impose
 the oath of the Five Mile Act on every person in the
 nation was rejected in the same session by a majority of
 six. The sufferings of the Nonconformists indeed could
 hardly fail to tell on the sympathies of the people. The
 thirst for revenge which had been roused by the tyranny
 of the Presbyterians in their hour of triumph was satisfied
 by their humiliation in their hour of defeat. The sight of
 pious and learned clergymen driven from their homes and
 their flocks, of religious meetings broken up by the con-
 stables, of preachers set side by side with thieves and
 outcasts in the dock, of gaols crammed with honest en-
 thusiasts whose piety was their only crime, pleaded more
 eloquently for toleration than all the reasoning in the
 world.

Milton. We have a clue to the extent of the persecution from
 what we know to have been its effect on a single sect.
 The Quakers had excited alarm by their extravagances of
 manner as well as by their refusal to bear arms or to take
 oaths, and a special Act was passed for their repression.
 They were one of the smallest of the Nonconformists bodies,
 but more than four thousand were soon in prison, and five
 hundred of these were imprisoned in London alone. The
 King's Declaration of Indulgence twelve years later set
 free twelve hundred Quakers who had found their way to
 the gaols. For not only had persecution failed to kill reli-
 gious liberty, but the very Puritanism which the Cavalier Par-
 liament believed itself to have trodden under foot was at this
 moment proving the noble life it had drawn from suffering

and defeat. It was at this moment that Milton produced
 the "Paradise Lost." During the Civil War he had been
 engaged in strife with presbyterians and with royalists,
 pleading for civil and religious freedom, for freedom of social
 life, and freedom of the press. At a later time he became
 Latin secretary to the Protector in spite of a blind-
 ness which had been brought on by the intensity of his
 study. The Restoration found him of all living men the
 most hateful to the royalists, for it was his "Defence
 of the English People" which had justified throughout
 Europe the execution of the King. Parliament ordered
 his book to be burnt by the common hangman; he was for
 a time imprisoned; and even when released he had to live
 amidst threats of assassination from fanatical Cavaliers.
 To the ruin of his cause were added personal misfor-
 tunes in the bankruptcy of the scrivener who held the
 bulk of his property, and in the Fire of London which
 deprived him of much of what was left. As age drew on
 he found himself reduced to comparative poverty and
 driven to sell his library for subsistence. Even among the
 sectaries who shared his political opinions Milton stood in
 religious opinion alone, for he had gradually severed him-
 self from every accepted form of faith, had embraced
 Arianism, and had ceased to attend at any place of
 worship.

Nor was his home a happy one. The grace and geniality
 of his youth disappeared in the drudgery of a schoolmaster's
 life and amongst the invectives of controversy. In age his
 temper became stern and exacting. His daughters, who
 were forced to read to their blind father in languages which
 they could not understand, revolted against their bondage.
 But solitude and misfortune only brought into bolder re-
 lief Milton's inner greatness. There was a grand simpli-
 city in the life of his later years. He listened every morn-
 ing to a chapter of the Hebrew Bible, and after musing in
 silence for a while pursued his studies till mid-day. Then
 he took exercise for an hour, played for another hour on

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His Life.

CHAP. I. The organ or viol, and renewed his studies. The evening was spent in converse with visitors and friends. For lonely and unpopular as Milton was, there was one thing about him which made his house in Bunhill Fields a place of pilgrimage to the wits of the Restoration. He was the last of the Elizabethans. He had possibly seen Shakspeare, as on his visits to London after his retirement to Stratford the playwright passed along Bread Street to his wit combats at the Mermaid. He had been the contemporary of Webster and Massinger, of Herrick and Crashaw. His "Comus" and "Arcades" had rivalled the masques of Ben Jonson. It was with a reverence drawn from thoughts like these that men looked on the blind poet as he sate, clad in black, in his chamber hung with rusty green tapestry, his fair brown hair falling as of old over a calm serene face that still retained much of its youthful beauty, his cheeks delicately coloured, his clear grey eyes showing no trace of their blindness. But famous whether for good or ill as his prose writings had made him, during fifteen years only a few sonnets had broken his silence as a singer. It was now in his blindness and old age, with the cause he loved trodden under foot by men as vile as the rabble in "Comus," that the genius of Milton took refuge in the great poem on which through years of silence his imagination had been brooding.

The
"Paradise
Lost."

On his return from his travels in Italy Milton spoke of himself as musing on "a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out His Seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases." His lips were touched at last. In the quiet retreat of his home in Bunhill Fields he mused during these years of persecution and loneliness

on the "Paradise Lost." The poem was published in 1667, seven years after the Restoration, and four years later appeared the "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes," in the severe grandeur of whose verse we see the poet himself "fallen," like Samson, "on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with danger compassed round." But great as the two last works were their greatness was eclipsed by that of their predecessor. The whole genius of Milton expressed itself in the "Paradise Lost." The romance, the gorgeous fancy, the daring imagination which he shared with the Elizabethan poets, the large but ordered beauty which he had drunk in from the literature of Greece and Rome, the sublimity of conception, the loftiness of phrase which he owed to the Bible, blended in this story "of man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe." It is only when we review the strangely mingled elements which make up the poem that we realize the genius which fused them into such a perfect whole. The meagre outline of the Hebrew legend is lost in the splendour and music of Milton's verse. The stern idealism of Geneva is clothed in the gorgeous robes of the Renaissance. If we miss something of the free play of Spenser's fancy, and yet more of the imaginative delight in their own creations which gives so exquisite a life to the poetry of the early dramatists, we find in place of these the noblest example which our literature affords of the majesty of classic form.

But it is not with the literary value of the "Paradise Lost" that we are here concerned. Its historic importance lies in this, that it is the Epic of Puritanism. Its scheme is the problem with which the Puritan wrestled in hours of gloom and darkness—the problem of sin and redemption, of the world-wide struggle of evil against good. The intense moral concentration of the Puritan had given an almost bodily shape to spiritual abstractions before Milton gave life and being to the forms of Sin and Death. It was the Puritan tendency to mass into one vast "body

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of sin" the various forms of human evil, and by the very force of a passionate hatred to exaggerate their magnitude and their power, to which we owe the conception of Milton's Satan. The greatness of the Puritan aim in the long and wavering struggle for justice and law and a higher good, the grandeur of character which the contest developed, the colossal forms of good and evil which moved over its stage, the debates and conspiracies and battles which had been men's life for twenty years, the mighty eloquence and the mightier ambition which the war had roused into being—all left their mark on the "Paradise Lost." Whatever was highest and best in the Puritan temper spoke in the nobleness and elevation of the poem, in its purity of tone, in its loftiness of conception, in its ordered and equable realization of a great purpose. Even in his boldest flights Milton is calm and master of himself. His touch is always sure. Whether he passes from Heaven to Hell or from the council hall of Satan to the sweet conference of Adam and Eve his tread is steady and unflinching.

Its
Defects.

But if the poem expresses the higher qualities of the Puritan temper it expresses no less exactly its defects. Throughout it we feel almost painfully a want of the finer and subtler sympathies, of a large and genial humanity, of a sense of spiritual mystery. Dealing as Milton does with subjects the most awful and mysterious that poet ever chose, he is never troubled by the obstinate questionings of invisible things which haunted the imagination of Shakspeare. We look in vain for any Æschylean background of the vast unknown. "Man's disobedience" and the scheme for man's redemption are laid down as clearly and with just as little mystery as in a Puritan discourse. On topics such as these, even God the Father (to borrow Pope's sneer) "turns a school divine." As in his earlier poems he had ordered and arranged nature, so in the "Paradise Lost" Milton orders and arranges Heaven and Hell. His mightiest figures, Angel or Archangel, Satan or

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Belial, stand out colossal but distinct. There is just as little of the wide sympathy with all that is human which is so lovable in Chaucer and Shakspeare. On the contrary the Puritan individuality is nowhere so overpowering as in Milton. He leaves the stamp of himself deeply graven on all he creates. We hear his voice in every line of his poem. The cold, severe conception of moral virtue which reigns throughout it, the intellectual way in which he paints and regards beauty (for the beauty of Eve is a beauty which no mortal man may love) are Milton's own. We feel his inmost temper in the stoical self-repression which gives its dignity to his figures. Adam utters no cry of agony when he is driven from Paradise. Satan suffers in a defiant silence. It is to this intense self-concentration that we must attribute the strange deficiency of humour which the poet shared with the Puritans generally, and which here and there breaks the sublimity of the poem with strange slips into the grotesque. But it is above all to this Puritan deficiency in human sympathy that we must attribute Milton's wonderful want of dramatic genius. Of the power which creates a thousand different characters, which endows each with its appropriate act and word, which loses itself in its own creations, no great poet ever had less.

While Milton was busy with his verse events were moving fast in favour of the cause which he saw trodden under foot. Defeat had only spurred the Dutch to fresh efforts. Their best seaman, De Ruyter, had reorganized their fleet, and appeared off the North Foreland in May, 1666, with eighty-eight vessels, stronger and better armed than those of Opdam. The English fleet was almost as strong; but a squadron had been detached under Prince Rupert to meet a French force reported to be at Belleisle, and it was with but sixty ships that the new admiral, Monk, Duke of Albemarle, fell in with De Ruyter's armament. There was no thought however of retreat, and a fight at once began, the longest and most stubborn

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Naval
War.

CHAP. I. that the seas have ever seen. The battle had raged for two whole days, and Monk, left with only sixteen ships uninjured, saw himself on the brink of ruin, when on the morning of the third he was saved by the arrival of Rupert. Though still greatly inferior in force, the dogged admiral renewed the fight on the fourth day as the Dutch drew off to their own coast, but the combat again ended in De Ruyter's favour and the English took refuge in the Thames. Their fleet was indeed ruined; twenty ships had been taken or sunk and a far larger number disabled; but the losses of the enemy had been hardly less. What the Dutch had discovered, owned De Witt, was, "that English sailors might be killed and English ships burned, but that there was no conquering Englishmen." At the close of July in fact the two fleets, again refitted, met anew off the North Foreland; and a second fight, as hard fought as that which had gone before, ended in an English victory. Twenty Dutch sail had struck or sunk, seven thousand Dutch seamen had been slain, while the English loss was comparatively small. The victorious fleet sailed along the rich coast of Holland, burning merchantmen and plundering its undefended towns. But Holland was as unconquerable as England herself. In a short time the Dutch fleet was again refitted and at sea, and Lewis, whose aid had hitherto been only in words, thought it time to act. The French fleet joined the Dutch, and the English found themselves too inferior in force to venture on a fresh battle for the command of the Channel.

Parliament and the War.

It was at this moment of national disappointment, with the fruit of great efforts snatched away and the sea lost, that a fresh calamity at home was added to the sufferings of the war. In the night of the second of September a fire broke out in the heart of London which raged for four days and reduced the city to ashes from the Tower to the Temple. Thirteen hundred houses and ninety churches were destroyed. The loss of merchandize and property was beyond count. Again the Parliament with stubborn

pride voted a subsidy of nearly two millions to refit the fleet. But the money came in slowly. The treasury was so utterly drained that it was agreed to fit out no large ships for the coming year. The ministers indeed were already seeking to conclude a peace through the mediation of France. It was not the public distress alone which drove Clarendon to peace negotiations: his own fears and those of the King had been alike fulfilled as the war went on. The country squires were disgusted at the obstinacy and cost of the struggle, and they visited their disgust on Clarendon as its supposed author. He had lost the support of the Houses, and the admission of fresh opponents into the royal council spoke of the secret enmity of the king. But Charles too had his reasons for desiring peace. He had a sleepless distrust of Parliaments, and his distrust was already justified. The "Cavalier" Parliament had met in a passion of loyalty. It had pressed for the death of the regicides. It had hardly been hindered from throwing all England into confusion by refusing its assent to the Amnesty Bill. It had ordered the League and Covenant, as well as the act deposing Charles Stuart, to be burned by the common hangman. It had declared the taking up arms against the King on any pretext to be treason, and had turned its declaration into a test to be exacted from every parson and every alderman. And yet this loyal parliament had faced and checked the Crown as boldly and pertinaciously as the Long Parliament itself. It had carried out its own ecclesiastical policy in the teeth of the known wishes of the King. It had humiliated him by forcing him to cancel his public declaration in favour of the Nonconformists. It gave counsel in foreign affairs, and met the King's leanings towards Lewis by expressions of its will for a contest with France. It voted large subsidies indeed, but at this juncture it inserted into the Subsidy Bill a clause which appointed a Parliamentary commission with powers to examine into the royal expenditure, and to question royal officers upon oath.

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Dutch in
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To Clarendon such a demand seemed as great an usurpation on the rights of the Crown as any measure of the Long Parliament, and he advised a dissolution. But the advice was rejected, for there was no hope that fresh elections could bring together a more royalist House of Commons than that of 1661. The attitude of the Houses showed in fact that the hottest royalists had learned, whether they would or no, the lesson of the Civil War. Whatever might in other ways be the temper of the Commons who assembled at Westminster, it was certain that the great constitutional revolution which was slowly removing the control of affairs from the hands of the Crown into those of the Parliament would go just as steadily on. But if Charles refused to dissolve the Parliament he longed to free himself from its power; and the mediation of France enabled a peace congress to assemble at Breda in May 1667. To Holland, eager to free its hands so as to deal with the French invasion of the Netherlands, an invasion which was now felt to be impending, peace was yet more important than to England; and a stroke of singular vigour placed peace within her grasp. Aware of the exhaustion of the English treasury and of the miserable state of the English navy, the persevering De Witt suddenly ordered the Dutch fleet, sixty vessels strong, to sail in June to the Thames. England was taken utterly by surprise. Neither ships nor forts were manned when the Hollanders appeared at the Nore. Pushing their light vessels without show of opposition up the Thames to Gravesend they forced the boom which protected the Medway, burned three men of war which lay anchored in the river, and withdrew only to sail proudly along the coast, the masters of the Channel.

Fall of
Clarendon.

The thunder of the Dutch guns in the Medway and the Thames woke England to a bitter sense of its degradation. The dream of loyalty was roughly broken. "Everybody now-a-days," Pepys tells us, "reflect upon Oliver and commend him: what brave things he did, and made all the

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neighbour princes fear him." But Oliver's successor was coolly watching this shame and discontent of his people with the one aim of turning it to his own advantage. To Charles the Second the degradation of England was only a move in the political game which he was playing, a game played with so consummate a secrecy and skill that it not only deceived close observers of his own day but still misleads historians in ours. The blow at once brought about the peace he desired. Each of the combatants retained what it had won, save that Holland gained the isle or Polaroon on the Bombay coast, and England the settlement of New Amsterdam on the Hudson, which was soon to be better known as her colony of New York. A result still more to the King's taste was the ruin of Clarendon. Clarendon had had no part in the reduction of the navy which had proved so fatal to English renown, but the public resentment fell on him alone. The Parliament, enraged by his counsel for its dissolution, saw in his call for forces to defend the coast an attempt to re-establish the one thing they hated most, a standing army. Charles could at last free himself from the minister who had held him in check so long. In August 1667 the Chancellor was dismissed from office, and driven by the express command of the King to take refuge in France.

CHAPTER II.

THE POPISH PLOT, 1667—1683.

*The
Cabal
Ministry.*

THE fall of Clarendon marks a new epoch in the history of the Restoration. By the exile of the Chancellor, the death of Lord Southampton, which had preceded, and the retirement of Ormond and Nicholas which followed it, the constitutional loyalists who had hitherto shaped the policy of the government disappeared from the royal council. The union between King, Church, and Parliament, on which their system had been based, was roughly dissolved. The House of Commons, which had been elected in a passion of loyalty only six years before found itself thrown into a position of antagonism to the Crown. The Church saw the most formidable opponent of its supremacy in the King.

For the first time since his accession Charles came boldly forward to the front of public affairs. He had freed himself, as he believed, from the domination of the constitutional loyalists and of the ministers who represented them. The new ministry was mainly made up of that section of the original ministry of 1660 which then represented the Presbyterians, and which under Ashley's guidance had bent to purchase toleration even at the cost of increasing the prerogatives of the Crown.

Ashley himself remained Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Duke of Buckingham, whose marriage with the daughter of Lord Fairfax allied him with the Presbyterians, and who carried on political relations even with the Independents, held a leading position in the new Cabinet, though at first without office. Sir William Coventry, a bitter opponent of Clarendon, took his seat at the treasury board. The direction of Scotch affairs was left to Lord Lauderdale, a man of rough and insolent manner but of striking ability, and whose political views coincided as yet mainly with those of Ashley. Two great posts however were filled by men whose elevation showed the new part which Charles himself was resolved to take in the task of administration. Foreign affairs the King determined to take into his own hands : and this was adroitly managed by the nomination of Henry Bennet, now become Earl of Arlington, as Secretary of State. Bennet was a man of sense and experience, but he was flexible and unprincipled, he was in heart a Catholic, and ready to serve as a creature of the royal will. Thomas, Lord Clifford, the new head of the Treasury, was a Catholic by conviction and ready to sacrifice English freedom if the sacrifice would bring back England to his faith.

Such was the ministry which from the accidental coincidence of the initial letters of the names of five of its members with those which make up the word was known as the Cabal. But the word Cabala, or Cabal, had as yet none of the odious meaning which after events attached to it ; it meant indeed simply what we mean by "cabinet." Nor was there anything in the temper or conduct of the new ministers which foreboded ill. To all but the King and themselves the Catholic sympathies of Clifford and Arlington were unknown. The ministry seemed to represent the Presbyterians, and the Presbyterians as a party were true to the cause of freedom for which they had fought. Nor did the earlier acts of the "Cabal" belie its origin. Few ministries in fact have shown at their outset

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*The
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CHAP. II. greater vigour or wisdom. Its first work was the Triple
 The Popish Plot. Alliance. The warlike outburst of feeling in the parliament
 1667-1693. at the prospect of a struggle with France had warned the
 French and English kings that a strife which both desired
 rather to limit than to widen must be brought to an end.
 The dexterous delays of Charles were seconded by the eager-
 ness with which Lewis pressed on the Peace of Breda be-
 tween England and the Dutch. To Lewis indeed it seemed
 as if the hour he had so long waited for was come. He had
 secured the neutrality of the Emperor by a secret treaty
 which provided for a division of the Spanish dominions
 between the two monarchs in case the King of Spain died
 without an heir. England, as he believed, was held in
 check by Charles, and like Holland was too exhausted by
 the late war to meddle with a new one. On the very day
 therefore on which the treaty of Breda was signed he sent
 in his formal claims on the Low Countries, and his army
 at once took the field. Flanders was occupied and six
 great fortresses secured in two months. Franche Comté
 was overrun in seventeen days.

English
Diplo-
macy.

But the suddenness and completeness of the French
 success woke a general terror before which the King's
 skilful diplomacy gave way. Holland, roused to a sense
 of danger by the appearance of French arms on the
 Rhine, protested and appealed to England for aid; and
 though her appeals remained at first unanswered even
 England was roused from her lethargy by the French
 seizure of the coast towns of Flanders. The earlier efforts
 of English diplomacy indeed were of a selfish and un-
 scrupulous kind. Holland, Spain, and France were tempted
 in turn by secret offers of alliance. A treaty offensive
 and defensive against all powers for the defence of the
 Spanish Netherlands was proposed to the Dutch. Spain
 was offered alliance and aid in return for the con-
 cession of free trade with her dominions in America and
 the Philippines. Before France was laid the project of
 an offensive and defensive alliance directed especially

against Holland, and perhaps against Spain, in return for
 which England stipulated for admission to a share in the
 eventual partition of the Spanish dominions, and for an
 assignment to her in such a case of the Spanish Empire in
 the New World. Each of these offers was alike refused.
 Spain looked on them as insincere. France regarded the
 terms of alliance as extravagant, while she was anxious to
 hold the Dutch to their present friendship and inactivity
 rather than to stir them to war. Holland itself, while
 desirous to check French ambition, still clung to its French
 alliance.

Repulsed as they were on every side the need of
 action became clearer every hour to the English minis-
 ters. The common refusal of France and the Dutch roused
 fears that these powers were secretly leagued for a parti-
 tion of the Netherlands between them. Wider views too
 gradually set aside the narrow dreams of merely national
 aggrandizement. To Ashley and his followers an increase
 of the French power seemed dangerous not only to the
 European balance of power but to English Protestantism.
 Even Arlington, Catholic as in heart he was, thought more
 of the political interests of England and of the invariable
 resolve of its statesmen since Elizabeth's day to keep the
 French out of Flanders than of the interests of Catholicism.
 One course alone remained. To lull the general excite-
 ment Lewis had offered peace to Spain on terms either or
 the cession of Franche Comté or of the retention of his con-
 quests in the Netherlands. The plan of John de Witt, the
 Pensionary of Holland, was to take France at its word and
 to force on Spain the acceptance of these terms by the
 joint pressure of England and the United Provinces. It
 was this plan which England suddenly adopted. In the
 opening of 1668 Sir William Temple was despatched to
 the Hague, and an alliance was concluded between England
 and Holland, in which Sweden, the third great Protestant
 power, was soon included.

Few measures have won a greater popularity than this.

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The
Triple
Alliance.

CHAP. II. Triple Alliance. "It is the only good public thing," says Pepys, "that hath been done since the King came to England." Even the Tory Dryden counted among the worst of Shaftesbury's crimes that "the Triple Bond he broke." In form indeed the alliance simply bound Lewis to adhere to terms of peace proposed by himself and those advantageous terms, the possession of the southern half of Flanders and of a string of fortresses which practically left him master of the Spanish Netherlands. But in fact it utterly ruined his plans. His offer of peace had been meant only as a blind. At the moment when Temple reached the Hague Lewis was writing to his general, Turenne, "I am turning over in my head things that are far from impossible, and go to carry them into execution whatever they may cost." Three armies were ready to march at once on Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands, when the intervention of the three powers suddenly arrested these schemes of conquest and forced Lewis to conclude peace at Aix la Chapelle. But the immediate gain was the least result of the Triple Alliance. It brought about that union of the powers of Europe against which, as Lewis felt instinctively, his ambition would dash itself in vain. It was Arlington's aim to make the Alliance the nucleus of a greater confederation: and he tried not only to perpetuate it but to include within it the Swiss Cantons, the Empire, and the House of Austria. His efforts were foiled; but the "Triple Bond" bore within it the germs of the Grand Alliance which at last saved Europe. To England it at once brought back the reputation which she had lost since the death of Cromwell. It was a sign of her re-entry on the general stage of European politics, and of her formal adoption of the balance of power as a policy essential to the welfare not of one or another nation but of Europe at large.

Lewis and Holland. Lewis was maddened by the check. But it was not so much the action of England which galled his pride as the action of Holland. That "a nation of shopkeepers," for

Lewis applied the phrase to the United Provinces long before Napoleon applied it to England, should have foiled his plans at the very moment of their realization "stung him," as he owned, "to the quick." He had always disliked the Dutch as Protestants and Republicans; he hated them now as an obstacle which must be taken out of his way ere he could resume his projects upon Spain. If he refrained from an instant attack on them it was to nurse a surer revenge. Four years were spent in preparations for a decisive blow. The French army was gradually raised to a hundred and eighty thousand men, while Colbert created a fleet which rivalled that of Holland in number and equipment. The steady aim of French diplomacy from the moment when Lewis was forced to sign the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was to isolate the United Provinces, to secure the neutrality of the Empire in any attack on them, to break the Triple Alliance by detaching Sweden from it and securing Charles, and to leave the Dutch without help save from the ineffectual good-will of Brandenburg and Spain.

In England the French designs were favoured by the political difficulties which at once followed on the fall of Clarendon. The new Ministry, representing as it did the Presbyterian party and a policy of toleration, was in itself a declaration on the King's part that the executive power was no longer necessarily to act in harmonious co-operation with the Parliament. Its first steps in releasing Nonconformists from prison, in suffering conventicles to reopen, and suspending the operation of the Act of Uniformity, were in open defiance of the known will of the two Houses. But when Charles again proposed to his counsellors a general toleration he no longer found himself supported by them as in 1663. Even Ashley's mood was changed. The policy of the Council in fact was determined by the look of public affairs abroad. The victories of Lewis, the sudden revelation of the strength of France, roused even in the most tolerant minds a dread of Catholi-

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CHAP. II. cism. Men felt instinctively that the very existence of Protestantism and with it of civil freedom was again to be at stake. Instead of toleration therefore the ministers pressed for a union of Protestants which would have utterly foiled the King's projects; and a scheme of Protestant comprehension which had been approved by the moderate divines on both sides, by Tillotson and Stillingfleet on the part of the Church as well as by Manton and Baxter on the part of the Nonconformists, was laid before the House of Commons in the session of 1668. Even its rejection failed to bring back Ashley and his party to their old position. They were still for toleration. But they were for a toleration the benefit of which did not extend to Catholics, "in respect the laws have determined the principles of the Romish religion to be inconsistent with the safety of your Majesty's person and government."

Parliament and the Cabal.

Again Charles was baffled. He had overthrown Clarendon in the belief that the Nonconformists must necessarily support him in the general reversal of Clarendon's policy. He found not only that to obtain a toleration for Catholics from his new ministers was as impossible as to obtain it from Clarendon himself, but that they were resolute to bring about that union of Protestants which Charles regarded as fatal to his designs and which the Chancellor's policy had at any rate prevented. Luckily for the King neither their new attitude at home nor their success abroad could win them the confidence of the House of Commons. As soon as it met they became the object of bitter attack. Their Comprehension Bill was rejected. Their suspension of the penalties for Nonconformity was denounced. "We shall remain unhappy," said one of the leaders of the Commons, Sir Edward Seymour, "so long as his majesty retains his present counsellors." It was in fact only by an early prorogation which was prolonged throughout the year that the ministers were saved from impeachment. Such a course however gave but a temporary respite; and Buckingham and Ashley

pressed on Charles the advisability of a dissolution. The House of Commons, they held, chosen as it had been eight years before in a moment of reaction, no longer really represented public opinion, and a new House would contain a larger proportion of members inclined to a policy of Protestant union. But Charles refused to dissolve the House. A Protestant union in fact was precisely what he wished to avoid. The pressure of a Parliament with Presbyterian leanings would be yet more fatal to the administrative independence he wished to maintain than a Cavalier Parliament. Above all such a Parliament would at once force him to take up a distinctly Protestant attitude, and to place himself at the head of the Protestant States as the leader in a European resistance to the supremacy of Catholicism and of France as the representative of Catholicism. How little such an attitude was to the King's taste we have already seen. He had been stirred to a momentary pride by the success of the Triple Alliance but he had never in heart abandoned his older policy. He still looked to France and to Catholicism as the most effective means of restoring his prerogative; and the sudden revelation of the power of Lewis, however it might startle his ministers into anxiety for freedom and Protestantism, only roused in the heart of their royal master a longing to turn it to the advantage of his crown.

Tempted however as he must have been to a new turn in his policy by the failure of his older plans at home and the display of French greatness, the sudden and decisive turn which he actually gave it was due above all to an event which, unknown as it as yet remained to Englishmen, was destined to exercise a vast influence from this moment on English politics. This was the conversion of his brother and presumptive successor James, Duke of York, to the Catholic faith. Though finally completed in the spring of 1672, this had for some time been imminent. The dull, truthful temper of the Duke hindered him from listening to his brother's remonstrances against this step;

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Conversion of James.

CHAP. II. but Charles was far too keen-witted to be blind to the difficulties in which it was certain to involve him. That either Churchman or Presbyterian should sit still and wait patiently the advent of a Catholic King, and above all a King whose temper would necessarily make him a Catholic bigot, was, as he foresaw, impossible. The step could not long be concealed; and when once it was known a demand would arise for the exclusion of James from the succession, or at the least for securities which would fetter the crown. Even if such a demand were surmounted a struggle between James and the Parliament was in the end inevitable, and such a struggle, if it ever arose, could end only in the establishment of Catholicism and despotism or in the expulsion of James from the throne. To foresee these consequences required no great keenness of sight; they were as plainly foreseen by Ashley and the bulk of Englishmen, when once the truth was known, as by Charles. But Charles was far from contenting himself with foreseeing them. He resolved to anticipate the danger by hurrying on the struggle which was certain to come. France alone could help him in forcing despotism and Catholicism on England, and from this moment Charles surrendered himself utterly to France. He declared to Lewis his purpose of entering into an alliance with him, offensive and defensive. He owned to being the only man in his kingdom who desired such a league, but he was determined, he said, to realize his desire, whatever might be the sentiments of his ministers.

*Treaty of
Doctr.*

His ministers indeed he meant either to bring over to his schemes or to outwit. Two of them, Arlington and Clifford, were Catholics in heart like the King; and in January 1669 they were summoned with the Duke of York and two Catholic nobles, Lords Bellasys and Arundel, to a conference in which Charles, after pledging them to secrecy, declared himself a Catholic and asked their counsel as to the means of establishing the Catholic religion in his realm. It was resolved to apply to Lewis for aid in this purpose;

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and Charles proceeded to seek from the King a "protection," to use the words of the French ambassador, "of which he always hoped to feel the powerful effects in the execution of his design of changing the present state of religion in England for a better, and of establishing his authority so as to be able to retain his subjects in the obedience they owe him." He was fully aware of the price he must pay for such a protection. Lewis was bent on the ruin of Holland and the annexation of Flanders. With the ink of the Triple Alliance hardly dry Charles promised help in both these designs. The Netherlands indeed could not be saved if Holland fell, and the fall of Holland was as needful for the success of the plans of Charles as of Lewis. It was impossible for Holland to look with indifference on the conversion of England into a Catholic power, and in the struggle to make it one the aid of the Dutch would be secured for the King's opponents. Charles offered therefore to declare his religion and to join France in an attack on Holland if Lewis would grant him a subsidy equal to a million a year. In the event of the King of Spain's death without a son Charles pledged himself to support France in her claims upon Flanders, while Lewis, made wiser by the results of his previous refusal, promised in such a case to assent to the designs of England on the Spanish dominions in America. On this basis, after a year's negotiations, a secret treaty was concluded in May 1670 at Dover in an interview between Charles and his sister Henrietta, the Duchess of Orleans. It provided that Charles should announce his conversion, and that in case of any disturbance arising from such a step he should be supported by a French army and a French subsidy. War was to be declared by both powers against Holland, England furnishing only a small land force but bearing the chief burthen of the contest at sea on condition of an annual subsidy of three hundred thousand pounds.

Nothing marks better the political profligacy of the age than that Arlington, the author of the Triple Alliance, should

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*The
Cabal and
the War.*

CHAP. II. have been chosen as the confidant of Charles in his treaty of Dover. But to all save Arlington and Clifford the King's change of religion or his political aims remained utterly unknown. It would have been impossible to obtain the consent of the party in the royal council which represented the old Presbyterians, of Ashley or Lauderdale or the Duke of Buckingham, to the treaty of Dover. But it was possible to trick them into approval of a war with Holland by playing on their desire for a toleration of the Nonconformists. The announcement of the King's Catholicism was therefore deferred; and a series of mock negotiations, carried on through Buckingham, ended in the conclusion of a sham treaty which was communicated to Lauderdale and to Ashley, a treaty which suppressed all mention of the religious changes or of the promise of French aid in bringing them about and simply stipulated for a joint war against the Dutch. In such a war there was no formal breach of the Triple Alliance for the Triple Alliance only guarded against an attack on the dominions of Spain, and Ashley and his colleagues were lured into assent to it in 1671 by the promise of toleration.

Ashley
and the
Dutch
War.

Toleration was still Ashley's first thought. He had provided for it only a year before in the constitution which he had drawn up with the aid of Locke for the new Colony of Carolina, which drew its name from King Charles. He looked the more hopefully to the King that in Scotland toleration had already been brought about by the royal authority. Nowhere had the system of conformity been more rigidly carried out than in the northern kingdom. Not only was the renunciation of the Covenant exacted from every parson and official but it was proposed to extend it to every subject in the realm. The fall of Clarendon however at once brought about a change. Lauderdale, who now took the lead in Scotch affairs, published in 1669 a royal decree which enabled many of the Presbyterian ministers to return to their flocks. A parliament which was called under his influence not only recognized the royal supremacy

but owned the King's right to order the government of the Church and to dispense with ecclesiastical laws. The new system was just set on foot in Scotland when Charles came forward to tempt his English ministers with the same pledge of toleration. With characteristic audacity he removed the one stumbling-block in the way of his project by yielding the point to which he had hitherto clung, and promising, as Ashley demanded, that no Catholic should be benefited by the Indulgence. Whether the pledge of toleration was the only motive which induced the ministers to consent to the war with Holland it is hard to tell. Ashley had shown in bringing about the previous strife that he was no friend of the Dutch. He regarded a close alliance with France as the one means by which Charles could find himself strong enough to maintain religious liberty against the pressure of the Parliament. It is possible that like most statesmen of the time he looked on the ruin of Holland as a thing inevitable, and was willing to gain for England whatever he could out of the wreck. If the United Provinces were to become a part of France it was better that a part of their territory and that the most important part, the Brill, Flushing, and the mouths of the Scheldt, should fall as had been stipulated to England than that Lewis should have all.

But whatever may have been the motives which influenced Ashley and his colleagues the bargain was at last struck; and now that his ministers were outwitted it only remained for Charles to outwit his Parliament. At the close of 1670 a large subsidy was demanded for the fleet under the pretext of upholding the Triple Alliance; and the subsidy was granted. In the spring of 1671 the two Houses were adjourned and vigorous preparations were made for the coming struggle. But as the rumours of war gathered strength the country at once became restless and dissatisfied. The power of Lewis, the renewed persecutions of the Huguenots, had increased the national hatred of the French. Protestants' hearts too trembled, as Baxter tells us, at the menacing

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The Declaration
of Indulgence.

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armaments of the "Catholic King." On the other hand the sense of a common interest and a common danger had changed the old jealousy of Holland into a growing inclination towards the Dutch. Charles and his ministers stood almost alone in their resolve. "Nearly all the court and all the members of Parliament that are in town," wrote the French ambassador, "make cabals to turn the King from his designs." Prince Rupert and the Duke of Ormond, the heads of the old royalist and constitutional party, supported the Dutch embassy which was sent to meet the offers of mediation made by Spain. So great was the pressure that Charles was only able to escape from it by plunging hastily into hostilities. In March 1672 a captain in the King's service attacked a Dutch convoy in the Channel. The attack was at once followed by a declaration of war, and fresh supplies were obtained for the coming struggle by closing the Exchequer and suspending under Clifford's advice the payment of either principal or interest on loans advanced to the public Treasury. The suspension spread bankruptcy among half the goldsmiths of London; but with the opening of the war Ashley and his colleagues gained the toleration they had bought so dear. By virtue of his ecclesiastical powers the King ordered "that all manner of penal laws on matters ecclesiastical against whatever sort of Nonconformists or recusants should be from that day suspended," and gave liberty of public worship to all dissidents save Catholics who were allowed to say mass only in private houses.

Bunyan.

The effect of the Declaration of Indulgence went far to justify Ashley and his colleagues (if anything could justify their course) in the bargain by which they purchased toleration. Ministers returned after years of banishment to their homes and flocks. Chapels were reopened. The gaols were emptied. Hundreds of Quakers who had been the special objects of persecution were set free to worship God after their own fashion. John Bunyan left the prison which had for twelve years been his home.

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We have seen the atmosphere of excited feeling in which the youth of Bunyan had been spent. From his childhood he heard heavenly voices and saw visions of heaven; from his childhood too he had been wrestling with an overpowering sense of sin which sickness and repeated escapes from death did much as he grew up to deepen. But in spite of his self-reproaches his life was a religious one; and the purity and sobriety of his youth was shown by his admission at seventeen into the ranks of the "New Model." Two years later the war was over, and Bunyan, though hardly twenty, found himself married in 1645 to a "godly" wife as young and penniless as himself. So poor were the young couple that they could scarce muster a spoon and a plate between them; and the poverty of their home deepened perhaps the gloom of the young tinker's restlessness and religious depression. His wife did what she could to comfort him, teaching him again to read and write for he had forgotten his school-learning, and reading with him in two little "godly" books which formed his library. But darkness only gathered the thicker round his imaginative soul. "I walked," he tells us of this time, "to a neighbouring town; and sate down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give me light and as if the very stones in the street and tiles upon the houses did band themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and wept to dwell among them, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature over I; for they stood fast and kept their station. But I was gone and lost."

At last in 1653 after more than two years of this struggle the darkness broke. Bunyan felt himself "converted" and freed from the burthen of his sin. He joined a Baptist church at Bedford, and a few years later he

Bunyan
in prison.

CHAP. II. became famous as a preacher. As he held no formal post of minister in the congregation his preaching even under the Protectorate was illegal and "gave great offence," he tells us, "to the doctors and priests of that county." He persisted however with little real molestation until the Restoration, but only six months had passed after the King's return when he was committed to Bedford Gaol on a charge of preaching in unlicensed conventicles. His refusal to promise to abstain from preaching kept him there eleven years. The gaol was crowded with prisoners like himself, and amongst them he continued his ministry, supporting himself by making tagged thread laces, and finding some comfort in the Bible, the "Book of Martyrs," and the writing materials which he was suffered to have with him in his prison. But he was in the prime of life; his age was thirty-two when he was imprisoned; and the inactivity and severance from his wife and little children was hard to bear. "The parting with my wife and poor children," he says in words of simple pathos, "hath often been to me in this place as the pulling of the flesh from the bones, and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child who lay nearer to my heart than all besides. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships I thought my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. 'Poor child,' thought I, 'what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee.'" But suffering could not break his purpose, and Bunyan found compensation for the narrow bounds of his prison in the wonderful activity of his pen. Tracts, controversial treatises, poems, meditations, his "Grace Abounding," and his "Holy City," followed each other in quick

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succession. It was in his gaol that he wrote the first and greatest part of his "Pilgrim's Progress."

The book had only just been completed when the Indulgence set Bunyan free. Its publication was the earliest result indeed of his deliverance, and the popularity which it enjoyed from the first proves that the religious sympathies of the English people were still mainly Puritan. Before Bunyan's death in 1688 ten editions of the "Pilgrim's Progress" had already been sold; and though even Cowper hardly dared to quote it a century later for fear of moving a smile in the polite world about him its favour among the middle classes and the poor has grown steadily from its author's day to our own. It is now the most popular and the most widely known of all English books. In none do we see more clearly the new imaginative force which had been given to the common life of Englishmen by their study of the Bible. Its English is the simplest and homeliest English which has ever been used by any great English writer; but it is the English of the Bible. The images of the "Pilgrim's Progress" are the images of prophet and evangelist; it borrows for its tenderer outbursts the very verse of the Song of Songs and pictures the Heavenly City in the words of the Apocalypse. But so completely has the Bible become Bunyan's life that one feels its phrases as the natural expression of his thoughts. He has lived in the Bible till its words have become his own. He has lived among its visions and voices of heaven till all sense of possible unreality has died away. He tells his tale with such a perfect naturalness that allegories become living things, that the Slough of Despond and Doubting Castle are as real to us as places we see every day, that we know Mr. Legality and Mr. Worldly Wiseman as if we had met them in the street. It is in this amazing reality of impersonation that Bunyan's imaginative genius specially displays itself. But this is far from being his only excellence. In its range, in its directness, in its simple grace, in the ease with which it changes from lively dialogue to dramatic

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The "Pil-
grim's
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CHAP. II.] action, from simple pathos to passionate earnestness, in the subtle and delicate fancy which often suffuses its childlike words, in its playful humour, its bold character-painting, in the even and balanced power which passes without effort from the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the land "where the Shining Ones commonly walked because it was on the borders of heaven," in its sunny kindliness unbroken by one bitter word, the "Pilgrim's Progress" is among the noblest of English poems. For if Puritanism had first discovered the poetry which contact with the spiritual world awakes in the meanest souls Bunyan was the first of the Puritans who revealed this poetry to the outer world. The journey of Christian from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly City is simply a record of the life of such a Puritan as Bunyan himself seen through an imaginative haze of spiritual idealism in which its commonest incidents are heightened and glorified. He is himself the pilgrim who flies from the City of Destruction, who climbs the hill Difficulty, who faces Apollyon, who sees his loved ones cross the river of Death towards the Heavenly City, and how, because "the hill on which the City was framed was higher than the clouds, they therefore went up through the region of the air, sweetly talking as they went."

The attack on Holland. Great however as was the relief of the Indulgence to men like Bunyan, it was difficult to wring from the bulk of the Nonconformists any expression of gratitude or satisfaction. Dear as toleration was to them, the general interests of religion were dearer, and not only these but national freedom was now at stake. Holland, the bulwark of Protestantism abroad, seemed to crumble into ruin at the first blow of France. Lewis passed the Rhine on the twelfth of June, and overran three of the States without opposition. It was only by skill and desperate courage that the Dutch ships under De Ruyter held the English fleet under the Duke of York at bay in an obstinate battle off the coast of Suffolk. Till almost the eve of the

struggle in fact the Dutch had been wrapt in a false security. The French alliance had been their traditional policy since the days of Henry the Fourth, and it was especially dear to the great merchant class which had mounted to power on the fall of the House of Orange. John de Witt, the leader of this party, though he had been forced to conclude the Triple Alliance by the previous advance of Lewis to the Rhine, had expressly refused to join England in an attack on France, and still clung blindly to her friendship. His trust only broke down when the glare of the French watch-fires was seen from the walls of Amsterdam.

For the moment Holland lay crushed at the feet of Lewis, but the arrogant demands of the conqueror roused again the stubborn courage which had wrested victory from Alva and worn out the pride of Philip the Second. De Witt was murdered in a popular tumult, and his fall called William, the Prince of Orange, to the head of the Republic. The new Stadholder had hardly reached manhood; but he had no sooner taken the lead in public affairs than his great qualities made themselves felt. His earlier life had schooled him in a wonderful self-control. He had been left fatherless and all but friendless in childhood; he had been bred among men who regarded his very existence as a danger to the state; his words had been watched, his looks noted, his friends jealously withdrawn. In such an atmosphere the boy grew up silent, wary, self-contained, grave in temper, cold in demeanour, blunt and even repulsive in address. He was weak and sickly from his cradle, and manhood brought with it an asthma and consumption which shook his frame with a constant cough; his face was sullen and bloodless, and scored with deep lines which told of ceaseless pain. But beneath this cold and sickly presence lay a fiery and commanding temper, an immovable courage, and a political ability of the highest order. William was a born statesman. Neglected as his education had been in other ways, for he knew nothing of letters or

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*The
Prince of
Orange.*

CHAP. II. of art, he had been carefully trained in politics by John de
 The Popish Witt; and the wide knowledge with which in his first
 Plot. address to the States-General the young Stadholder reviewed
 1667- the general state of Europe, the sagacity with which he
 1683. calculated the chances of the struggle, at once won him
 — the trust of his countrymen.

William Their trust was soon rewarded. The plot of the two
 and the courts hung for its success on the chances of a rapid sur-
 French prise, and with the approach of winter, a season in which
 Invasion. military operations were then suspended, all chance of a
 surprise was over. William rapidly turned the respite
 to good account. Young as he was he displayed from the
 first the cool courage and dogged tenacity of his race.
 "Do you not see your country is lost?" asked the
 Duke of Buckingham when he was sent to negotiate
 at the Hague. "There is a sure way never to see it
 lost," replied William, "and that is to die in the last
 ditch." With the spring of 1673 the tide began to turn.
 Holland was saved, and province after province won
 back from the arms of France by William's dauntless re-
 solve. Like his great ancestor, William the Silent, he was
 a luckless commander, and no general had to bear more
 frequent defeats. But he profited by defeat as other men
 profit by victory. His bravery indeed was of that nobler
 cast which rises to its height in moments of ruin and dis-
 may. The coolness with which, boy-general as he was,
 he rallied his broken squadrons amidst the rout of Seneff
 and wrested from Condé at the last the fruits of his vic-
 tory moved his veteran opponent to a generous admiration.
 It was at such moments indeed that the real temper of the
 man broke through the veil of his usual reserve. A strange
 light flashed from his eyes as soon as he was under fire;
 and in the terror and confusion of defeat his cold and re-
 pulsive manner was thrown aside for an ease and gaiety
 which charmed every soldier around him.

Parlia- The gallant struggle of the prince was hardly needed to
 ment and win the sympathies of Englishmen to the cause of the
 the War.

Dutch. In the exultation of the first moment of triumph
 Charles had lavished honours on the leaders of both the
 parties in his cabinet. Clifford became Lord Treasurer,
 Ashley was made Chancellor and raised to the Earldom of
 Shaftesbury. But the dream of triumph soon passed away.
 The Duke of York had owned at the outset of the war
 that recourse could only be had to Parliament when
 success had put Charles in a position "to obtain by force
 what he could not get by pleasanter ways." But the
 delay of winter exhausted the supplies which had been
 procured so unscrupulously, while the closing of the trea-
 sury had shaken credit and rendered it impossible to raise
 a loan. It was necessary therefore in 1673, though the
 success Charles had counted on was still delayed, to appeal
 to the Commons. But the Commons met in a mood of
 angry distrust. The war, unpopular as it was, they left
 alone. What overpowered all other feelings was a vague
 sense, which we know now to have been justified by
 the facts, that liberty and religion were being unscrupu-
 lously betrayed. There was a suspicion that the whole
 armed force of the nation was in Catholic hands. The
 Duke of York was suspected of being in heart a Catholic,
 and he was in command of the fleet. Catholics had been
 placed as officers in the land force which was being raised
 for a descent upon Holland. Lady Castlemaine, the King's
 mistress, paraded her change of faith; and doubts were
 fast gathering over the Protestantism of the King. There
 was a general dread that a plot was on foot for the estab-
 lishment of Catholicism and despotism, and that the war and
 the Indulgence were parts of the plot.

The change of temper in the Commons was marked by
 the appearance of what was from that time called the
 Country party with Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and Sir
 William Coventry at its head, a party which sympathized
 with the desire of the Nonconformists for religious tolera-
 tion but looked on it as its first duty to guard against
 the political and religious designs of the Court. The House

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 —

The
 Test Act.

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listened unmoved to the fiery address of the new Lord Chancellor in favour of the war, an address which ended with the phrase, "Delenda est Carthago," so often quoted against him afterwards, as they listened unmoved to the King's declaration of his steady adherence to the Indulgence. "I shall take it very ill," said Charles, with unusual haughtiness, "to receive contradiction in what I have done; and, I will deal plainly with you, I am resolved to stick to my declaration." As to the Declaration of Indulgence however all parties in the House were at one. The Commons resolved "that penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by consent of Parliament," and refused supplies till the Declaration was recalled. The King yielded after long hesitation, for the grant of supplies was still before the House and France counselled compliance. But the Declaration was no sooner recalled than the Parliament passed from considerations of the past to provisions for the future. A Test Act was passed through both Houses without opposition, which required that everyone in the civil and military employment of the State should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, subscribe a declaration against transubstantiation, and receive the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. It was known that the dissidents were prepared to waive all objection either to oath or sacrament, and the result of the Bill therefore was to bring Protestants, if not to union, yet a step nearer to one another. Catholics on the other hand were wholly excluded from all share in the government of the State. The Act was fatal to the King's schemes, and Clifford at once counselled resistance while Buckingham talked flightily about bringing the army to London. But the grant of a subsidy was still held in suspense till the Test was accepted: and Arlington, who saw that all hope of carrying the "great plan" through was at an end and looked to the Test as a means of freeing himself from Clifford's rivalry in the cabinet, pressed Charles to yield. A disso-

lution in fact was the King's only resource, but in the temper of the nation a new Parliament would have been yet more violent than the present one. Charles therefore sullenly gave his assent to the Bill.

Few measures have ever brought about more startling results than the Test Act. It was no sooner passed than the Duke of York owned himself a Catholic and resigned his office as Lord High Admiral. Throngs of excited people gathered round the Lord Treasurer's house at the news that Clifford too had owned to being a Catholic and had laid down his staff of office. Their resignation was followed by that of hundreds of others in the army and the civil service of the Crown. On public opinion the effect of these discoveries was wonderful. "I dare not write all the strange talk of the town," says Evelyn. The resignations were held to have proved the existence of the dangers which the Test had been framed to meet. From this moment all trust in Charles was at an end. "The King," Shaftesbury said bitterly, "who if he had been so happy as to have been born a private gentleman had certainly passed for a man of good parts, excellent breeding, and well natured, hath now, being a Prince, brought his affairs to that pass that there is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon him or put any confidence in his word or friendship." The one man in England indeed on whom the discovery of the King's perfidy fell with the most crushing effect was Shaftesbury himself. Ashley Cooper had piqued himself on a penetration which read the characters of men around him and on a political instinct which discerned every coming change. He had bought, as he believed, the Declaration of Indulgence, the release of the imprisoned Nonconformists, and freedom of worship for all dissidents, at the price of a consent to the second attack on Holland; and he was looked on by the public at large as the minister most responsible both for the measures he advised and the measures he had nothing to do with. But while facing the gathering storm of unpopularity Ashley learnt in a moment

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CHAP. II. of drunken confidence the secret of the King's religion. He owned to a friend "his trouble at the black cloud which was gathering over England;" but troubled as he was he still believed himself strong enough to use Charles for his own purposes. His acceptance of the Chancellorship and of the Earldom of Shaftesbury, as well as his violent defence of the war on opening the Parliament, identified him yet more with the royal policy. It was after the opening of the Parliament, if we credit the statement of the French Ambassador, a statement which squares with the sudden change in his course, that he learnt from Arlington who desired to secure his help in driving Clifford from the royal councils the secret of the Treaty of Dover.

Shaftesbury's change of Policy

Whether this was so, or whether suspicion as in the people at large deepened into certainty, Shaftesbury saw he had been duped. To the bitterness of such a discovery was added the bitterness of having aided in schemes which he abhorred. His change of policy was rapid and complete. He pressed in the royal council for the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence. In Parliament he supported the Test Act with extraordinary vehemence. But he was far from any thought of resigning his post. He clung to it in fact more tenaciously than ever, for the displacement of James and Clifford by the test left him as he thought dominant in the royal council and gave him hopes of revenging the deceit which had been practised on him by forcing his policy on the King. He was resolved to end the war. He had dreams of meeting the danger of a Catholic successor by a dissolution of the King's marriage with Catharine and by a fresh match with a Protestant princess. For the moment indeed Charles was helpless. He found himself, as he had told Lewis long before, alone in his realm. The Test Act had been passed unanimously by both Houses. Even the Nonconformists deserted him and preferred persecution to the support of his plans. The dismissal of the Catholic

officers made the employment of force, if he ever contemplated it, impossible, while the ill success of the Dutch war robbed him of all hope of aid from France. The firmness of the Prince of Orange had roused the stubborn energy of his countrymen; the French conquests on land were slowly won back; and at sea the fleet of the allies was still held in check by the fine seamanship of De Ruyter. Nor was William less successful in diplomacy than in war. The House of Austria was at last stirred to action by the danger which threatened Europe; and its union with the United Provinces laid the foundation of the Grand Alliance.

Charles indeed was still firm to continue the war. He had gathered an army on the coast for a descent upon Holland, and he again sent his fleet to sea under Prince Rupert to clear the way for its landing. But the gallantry and seamanship of Van Tromp forced Rupert to withdraw after an indecisive engagement, and the descent on the Dutch coast had become impossible when the Parliament again met in October. The House was resolved upon peace, and Shaftesbury was as determined to end the war as the House itself. It was for this purpose that he threw himself into hearty alliance with the Country party in the Commons and welcomed the Duke of Ormond and Prince Rupert, who were looked upon as "great Parliament men," back to the royal council. It was to Shaftesbury's influence that Charles attributed the dislike which the Commons displayed to the war and their refusal of a grant of supplies for it until fresh religious securities were devised. It was at his instigation that an address was presented by both Houses at the end of 1673 against the plan of marrying James to a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena, a plan which as James was still without a male heir promised to secure the succession, should a son be the result of the marriage, in a Catholic line. But Charles was not yet inclined to play the part of a mere puppet in other men's hands, and the projects of Shaftesbury were

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suddenly interrupted by an unexpected act of vigour on the part of the King. The Houses were prorogued in November, and the Chancellor was ordered to deliver up the Seals.

"It is only laying down my gown and buckling on my sword," Shaftesbury is said to have replied to the royal bidding; and though the words were innocent enough, for the sword was part of the usual dress of a gentleman which he must necessarily resume when he laid aside the gown of the Chancellor, they were taken as conveying a covert threat. He was still determined to force on the King a peace with the States. But he looked forward to the dangers of the future with even greater anxiety than to those of the present. The Duke of York, the successor to the throne, had owned himself a Catholic; and almost everyone agreed that securities for the national religion would be necessary in the case of his accession. But Shaftesbury saw, and it is his especial merit that he did see, that with a King like James, convinced of his Divine Right and bigoted in his religious fervour, securities were valueless. From the first he determined to force on Charles his brother's exclusion from the throne, and his resolve was justified by the Revolution, which finally did the work he proposed to do. Unhappily he was equally determined to fight Charles with weapons as vile as his own. The result of Clifford's resignation, of James's acknowledgment of his conversion, had been to destroy all belief in the honesty of public men. A panic of distrust had begun. The fatal truth was whispered that Charles himself was a Catholic. In spite of the Test Act it was suspected that men Catholics in heart still held high office in the State, and we know that in Arlington's case the suspicion was just. Shaftesbury seized on this public alarm, stirred above all by a sense of inability to meet the secret dangers which day after day was disclosing, as the means of carrying out his plans. He began fanning the panic by tales of a Papist rising in

London and of a coming Irish revolt with a French army to back it. He retired to his house in the City to find security against a conspiracy which had been formed, he said, to cut his throat. Meanwhile he rapidly organised the Country party in the Parliament and placed himself openly at its head. An address for the removal of ministers "popishly affected or otherwise obnoxious or dangerous" was presented on the re-assembling of the Houses in 1674. The Lower House called on the King to dismiss Lauderdale, Buckingham, and Arlington, and to disband the troops he had raised since 1664. A bill was brought in to prevent all Catholics from approaching the Court, in other words for removing James from the King's Councils. A far more important bill was that of the Protestant Securities which was pressed by Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Carlisle, the leaders of the new Opposition in the House of Lords, a bill which enacted that any prince of the blood should forfeit his right to the Crown on his marriage with a Catholic.

The bill, which was the first sketch of the later Exclusion Bill, failed to pass but its failure left the Houses excited and alarmed. Shaftesbury intrigued busily in the City, corresponded with William of Orange, and pressed for a war with France which Charles could only avert by an appeal to Lewis, a subsidy from whom enabled him to prorogue the Parliament. But Charles saw that the time had come to give way. Spain was now joining Holland, and a war with Spain would have deprived English merchants of their most lucrative branch of commerce. The refusal of supplies by the Commons hastened the King's resolve. "Things have turned out ill," he said to Temple with a burst of unusual petulance, "but had I been well served I might have made a good business of it." His concessions however were as usual complete. He dismissed Buckingham and Arlington from office. He made peace with the Dutch. But Charles was never more formidable than in the moment of

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Peace
with
Holland.

CHAP. II. defeat, and he had already determined on a new policy by
 The Popish which the efforts of Shaftesbury and the Country party
 Plot. might be held at bay. Ever since the opening of his
 1667- reign he had clung to a system of balance, had pitted
 1683. Churchman against Nonconformist and Ashley against
 Clarendon, partly to preserve his own independence and
 partly with a view of winning some advantage to the
 Catholics from the political strife. The temper of the
 Commons had enabled Clarendon to baffle the King's
 attempts; and on his fall Charles felt strong enough to
 abandon the attempt to preserve a political balance and
 had sought to carry out his designs with the single
 support of the Nonconformists. But the new policy had
 broken down like the old. The Nonconformists refused
 to betray the cause of Protestantism, and Shaftesbury,
 their leader, was pressing on measures which would rob
 Catholicism of the hopes it had gained from the conversion
 of James. In straits like these Charles resolved to win
 back the Commons by boldly adopting the policy on
 which the House was set.

Danby. The majority of its members were still a mass of
 Cavalier Churchmen, who regarded Sir Thomas Osborne,
 a dependant of Arlington's, as their representative in the
 royal councils. The King had already created Osborne
 Earl of Danby and raised him to the post of Lord
 Treasurer in Clifford's room. In 1674 he frankly adopted
 the policy of Danby and of his party in the Parliament.
 The policy of Danby was in the main that of Clarendon.
 He had all Clarendon's love of the Church, his equal
 hatred of Popery and Dissent, his high notions of the pre-
 rogative tempered by a faith in Parliament and the law.
 His policy rested like Clarendon's on a union between the
 King and the two Houses. He was a staunch Protestant,
 and his English pride revolted against any schemes which
 involved dependence on France. But he was a staunch
 royalist. He wished for a French war, but he would not
 force the King to fight France against his will. His terror

of Popery failed to win him over to any plans for a change
 in the succession. The first efforts indeed of the King
 and his minister were directed to strengthen James's
 position by measures which would allay the popular
 panic. Mary, the Duke's eldest child and after him the
 presumptive heir to the Crown, was confirmed by the
 royal order as a Protestant. It was through Mary indeed
 that Charles aimed at securing the Prince of Orange. The
 popularity of William throughout the Protestant world was
 great; and in England, as the terror of a Popish King
 increased, men remembered that were James and his house
 excluded from the throne William as the King's nephew,
 the son of his sister Mary and the grandson of Charles the
 First, stood next in succession to the crown. The Prince
 was drawn by his desire to detach England from the French
 alliance into close connection with Shaftesbury and the
 leaders of the Country party, and already pledges from this
 quarter had reached him that he should be declared heir
 to the throne. It was to meet this danger that Charles
 resolved to offer William the hand of the Duke's daughter,
 Mary. Such a marriage secured James against the one
 formidable rival to his claims, while it opened to William
 a far safer chance of mounting the throne at his father-in-
 law's death in right of his wife. The prospect too of such
 a Protestant succession might well allay much of the panic
 which was spreading through the country as men looked
 forward to the accession of a Catholic King.

The secret negotiations for this marriage which began at
 the close of 1674 were accompanied by conferences between
 Danby and the bishops which restored the union between
 the Church and the Crown. The first fruits of this agree-
 ment were seen in the rigorous enforcement of the law
 against conventicles and the exclusion of all Catholics
 from Court; while the Parliament which re-assembled in
 1675 was assured that the Test Act should be rigorously
 enforced. The change in the royal policy came not a
 moment too soon. As it was the aid of the Cavalier party

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Danby
 and the
 Commons.

CHAP. II. which rallied round Danby hardly saved the King from the humiliation of being forced to recall the troops he still maintained in the French service. To gain a majority on this point Danby was forced to avail himself of a resource which from this time played for nearly a hundred years an important part in English politics. Every hour showed more clearly how fatal to its healthy working was the abandonment of the reforms which the Long Parliament and Cromwell had introduced into the composition of the House of Commons. The influence of that House was growing greater and greater on public affairs. In spite of the King's vigorous resistance it was reviewing expenditure, dictating its own policy in Church and State, checking the royal action even in foreign affairs, denouncing ministers and driving them from office, meddling now even with the succession to the Crown. It did this as representing the people, and yet the people could hardly be said to be represented. The counties alone really returned their own members, and in the counties the franchise was limited to freeholders. In all but the larger towns the nomination of members lay in the hands of close corporations. A large number of so-called boroughs had ceased to have any real existence at all. Their representatives were simply nominees of the Crown or of neighbouring landowners.

Policy of corruption and persecution. On great questions so imperfect a composition of the representative body mattered indeed little, for whatever were their origin the members shared in the general national feeling and expressed fairly the national sentiment. But in the common business of Parliament and in questions of detail it told fatally on the temper of the House. The members were conscious of their power but they were checked by little sense of responsibility for its exercise. They were open therefore to the meanest and most selfish influences. Charles had done much by "closeting" them. Danby, bolder and less ingenious, trusted to coarser means. With him began the system of direct bribery which was to culminate in the Parliamentary corruption of the Pelhams.

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He was more successful in winning back the majority of the Commons from their alliance with the Country party by reviving the old spirit of religious persecution. With the view of breaking up the growing union between the Churchmen and the Nonconformists as well as of driving from Parliament the Presbyterian members who formed the strength of the Country party, and whose numbers increased as time brought fresh elections, he proposed that the test which had been imposed by Clarendon on municipal officers should be extended to all functionaries of the State, that every member of either House, every magistrate and public officer, should swear never to take arms against the King or to "endeavour any alteration of the Protestant religion now established by law in the Church of England, or any alteration in the Government in Church and State as it is by law established." The Bill was forced through the Lords by the bishops and the Cavalier party, and its passage through the Commons was only averted by a quarrel on privilege between the two Houses which Shaftesbury dexterously fanned into flame.

On the other hand the Country party remained strong enough to hamper their grant of supplies with conditions which rendered it unacceptable to the King. Eager as they were for the war with France which Danby promised, the Commons could not trust the King; and Danby was soon to discover how wise their distrust had been. For the Houses were no sooner prorogued in November 1675 than Charles revealed to him the negotiations he had been all the while carrying on with Lewis. To France, hard pressed as she was by the allies, the entry of England into the war would have been ruinous; and Lewis was eager to avert this danger by promising Charles a subsidy should the Parliament strive to force on him a war policy by refusing or limiting supplies. Charles, who still looked to France for aid in his plans and who believed war would deliver him helplessly into the power of the Parliament, was as ready to accept the money as Lewis to give it.

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*Charles
turns to
France.*

CHAP. II. At this juncture therefore he called on Danby to sign a treaty by which on consideration of a yearly pension guaranteed on the part of France the two sovereigns bound themselves to enter into no engagements with other powers, and to lend each other aid in case of rebellion in their dominions. Such a treaty not only bound England to dependence on France but freed the King from all Parliamentary control. But his minister pleaded in vain for delay and for the advice of the Council. Charles answered his entreaties by signing the treaty with his own hand.

Danby's measures. Danby found himself duped by the King as Shaftesbury had found himself duped; but his bold temper was only spurred to fresh plans for rescuing the King from his bondage to Lewis. To do this the first step was fully to reconcile the King and the Parliament, which met again in February 1677 after a prorogation of fifteen months. The Country party stood in the way of such a reconciliation, but Danby resolved to break its strength by measures of unscrupulous vigour for which a blunder of Shaftesbury's gave an opportunity. Shaftesbury despaired of bringing the House of Commons, elected as it had been fifteen years before in a moment of religious and political reaction, to any steady opposition to the Crown. He had already moved an address for its dissolution; and he now urged that as a statute of Edward the Third ordained that Parliaments should be held "once a year or oftener if need be" the Parliament by the recent prorogation of a year and a half had ceased legally to exist. The Triennial Act deprived such an argument of any force, and its only effect was to place the Country party in an injudicious position of general hostility to the existing Parliament. But Danby represented it as a contempt of the House, and the Lords at his bidding committed its supporters, Shaftesbury, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton, to the Tower. While the Opposition cowered under the blow Danby pushed on a measure which was designed to win back alarmed Churchmen to confidence in the Crown. The terror of a Catholic successor grew steadily

throughout the country, and it was to meet this terror that Danby devised his Bill for the security of the Church. By this Bill it was provided that on the succession of any king who was not a member of the Established Church the appointment of bishops should be vested in the existing body of prelates, and that the King's children should be placed in the guardianship of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The bill however failed in the Commons; and a grant of supply unchecked by the appropriation of the money to special services, a limitation which Charles steadily opposed, was only obtained by Danby's profuse bribery. The progress of the war abroad indeed was rousing panic in England faster than Danby could allay it. New successes of the French arms in Flanders and a defeat of the Prince of Orange at Cassel stirred the whole country to a cry for war. The two Houses united in an address to the Crown which prayed that England might enter into the Great Alliance that William had built up, but Charles parried the blow by demanding a supply before the war was declared and by a new prorogation of the House on a new refusal. Fresh and larger subsidies from France enabled him to continue this prorogation for seven months. But the silence of the Parliament did little to silence the country; and Danby took advantage of the popular cry for war to press an energetic course of action on the King. In its will to check French aggression the Cavalier party was as earnest as the Puritan, and Danby aimed at redeeming his failure at home by uniting the Parliament through a vigorous policy abroad.

As usual Charles appeared to give way. He was himself for the moment uneasy at the appearance of the French on the Flemish coast, and he owned that "he could never live at ease with his subjects" if Flanders were abandoned. He allowed Danby therefore to press on both parties the necessity for mutual concessions and to define the new attitude of England by reviving the project for a match between Mary and William of Orange.

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1683.

The cry
for War.

Marriage
of
William
and
Mary.

CHAP. II. William's distrust of Arlington, by whom the proposal of it had been made to him, had led the Prince at first to set aside the scheme. But he had never lost sight of it, and the counsels of Sir William Temple had brought him in 1677 to make overtures for its realization. Charles and Danby had still the same reasons for desiring it, and the marriage took place on William's visit to England in September. As the King was childless and James had no son Mary was presumptive heiress of the Crown. The marriage therefore promised a close political union in the future with Holland and a corresponding opposition to the ambition of France. With the country it was popular as a Protestant match and as ensuring a Protestant successor to James. But Lewis was bitterly angered; he rejected the English propositions of peace and again sent his army in the field. Danby was ready to accept the challenge. The withdrawal of the English ambassador from Paris was followed in 1678 by an assembly of the Parliament; a warlike speech from the throne was answered by a warlike address from the House, large supplies were voted and an army raised.

Peace of Nime-
guen.
But the actual declaration of war still failed to appear; indeed Charles was in heart as disinclined for war as ever. While Danby threatened France the King was busy turning the threat to his own profit, and gaining time by prorogations for a series of base negotiations. At one stage he demanded from Lewis a fresh pension for the next three years as the price of his good offices with the allies. Danby stooped to write the demand, and Charles added "this letter is written by my order, C.R." A force of three thousand English soldiers was landed at Ostend; but the allies were already broken by their suspicions of the King's real policy, and Charles soon agreed for a fresh pension to recall the brigade. The bargain was hardly struck when Lewis withdrew the terms of peace he had himself offered and on the faith of which England had ostensibly retired from the scene. Once more Danby



CHAP. II. offered aid to the allies. But all faith in England had now disappeared. One hostile power after another gave assent to the new conditions laid down by France, and though Holland, the original cause of the war, was saved, the Peace of Nimegwen in July 1678 made Lewis the arbiter of Europe.

*The
Catholic
Hopes.*

Disgraceful as the peace was to England, it left Charles the master of a force of twenty thousand men levied for a war he had refused to declare. It left him too with nearly a million of French money in his pocket. His course had roused into fresh life the old suspicions of his perfidy and of a secret plot with Lewis for the ruin of English freedom and of English religion. That there was such a plot we know; and from the moment of the Treaty of Dover the hopes of the Catholic party had mounted even faster than the panic of the Protestants. But they had been bitterly disappointed by the King's sudden withdrawal from the prosecution of his schemes after his four years' ineffectual struggle, and roused to wild anger by his seeming return to the policy of Clarendon. Their anger and disappointment were revealed in the letters from English Jesuits which were afterwards to play so fatal a part in begetting a belief in the plot, and in the correspondence of Coleman. Coleman was secretary of the Duchess of York and a busy intriguer, who had gained sufficient knowledge of the real plans of the King and of his brother to warrant him in begging money from Lewis for the work of saving Catholic interests from Danby's hostility by intrigues in the Parliament. A passage from one of his letters gives us a glimpse of the wild dreams which were stirring among the hotter Catholics of the time. "They had a mighty work on their hands," he wrote, "no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy which had so long domineered over a great part of the northern world. Success would give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had received since its birth." But while the despair of the Catholic party was unknown their

previous attitude of confidence had stirred suspicions in the public mind which mounted into alarm when the Peace of Nimegwen suddenly left Charles master—as it seemed—of the position, and it was of this general panic that one of the vile impostors who are always thrown to the surface at times of great public agitation was ready to take advantage by the invention of a Popish plot.

Titus Oates, a Baptist minister before the Restoration, a curate and navy chaplain after it, but left penniless by his infamous reputé, had sought bread in a conversion to Catholicism, and had been received into Jesuit houses at Valladolid and St. Omer. While he remained there he learnt the fact of a secret meeting of the Jesuits in London which was probably nothing but the usual congregation of the order, and on his expulsion for misconduct this single fact widened in his fertile brain into a plot for the subversion of Protestantism and the death of the King. His story was laid before Charles in the August of 1678 and received, as was natural enough, with the cool incredulity of one who knew what plot there really had been; but Oates made affidavit of its truth before a London magistrate, Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and at last managed to appear before the Council. He declared that he had been trusted with letters which disclosed the Jesuit plans. They were stirring rebellion in Ireland; in Scotland they disguised themselves as Cameronians; in England their aim was to assassinate the King and to leave the throne open to the Papist Duke of York. The extracts from Jesuit letters however which he produced, though they showed the bitter disappointment and anger of their writers at the King's withdrawal from his schemes, threw no light on the monstrous charges of a plot for his assassination. Oates would have been dismissed indeed with contempt but for the seizure of Coleman's correspondence. The letters of this intriguer, believed as he was to be in the confidence of the Duke of York, gave a new colour to the plot. Danby himself, conscious of the truth that

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*Titus
Oates.*

CHAP. II. there really were designs which Charles dared not avow, was shaken in his rejection of the disclosures and inclined to use them as weapons to check the King in his Catholic policy. But a more dexterous hand had already seized on the growing panic. Lord Shaftesbury, released after a long imprisonment from the Tower, ready since his discovery of the Treaty of Dover to believe in any conspiracy between the Catholics and the King, and hopeless of foiling the King's policy in any other way, threw himself into the plot. "Let the Treasurer cry as loud as he pleases against Popery," he laughed, "I will cry a note louder." But no cry was needed to heighten the popular frenzy from the moment when Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Oates had laid his information, was found in a field near London with his sword run through his heart. His death was assumed to be murder, and the murder to be an attempt of the Jesuits to "stifle the plot." A solemn funeral added to the public agitation; and the two houses named committees to investigate the charges made by Oates.

Shaftesbury and the Plot.

In this investigation Shaftesbury took the lead. Whatever his personal ambition may have been, his public aims in all that followed were wise and far sighted. He aimed at forcing Charles to dissolve the Parliament and appeal again to the nation. He aimed at driving Danby out of office and at forcing on Charles a ministry which should break his dependence on France and give a constitutional turn to his policy. He saw that no security would really avail to meet the danger of a Catholic sovereign, and he aimed at excluding James from the throne. But in pursuing these aims he threw himself from that moment wholly on the plot. He fanned the popular panic by accepting without question some fresh depositions in which Oates charged five Catholic peers with part in the Jesuit conspiracy. Two of these five, Lords Arundel and Bellasys, had in fact taken part in the preliminary conference which led to the Treaty of Dover. Of this nothing

was known, but the five were sent to the Tower and two thousand suspected persons were hurried to prison. A proclamation ordered every Catholic to leave London. The trainbands were called to arms, and patrols paraded through the streets to guard against the Catholic rising which Oates declared to be at hand. Meanwhile Shaftesbury turned the panic to political account. He fiercely demanded in the House of Lords the exclusion of the Duke of York from the King's Council, and his demand was repeated in an address of the Commons. Charles met the attack with consummate skill. Anticipating the future Exclusion Bill, he declared himself ready to sanction any measures which secured the Protestant religion so long as they left untouched the right of hereditary succession and the just power of the Crown. Shaftesbury retorted by forcing through Parliament at the end of 1678 a bill which excluded Catholics from a seat in either House. The exclusion remained in force for a century and a half; but it had really been aimed against the Duke of York, and Shaftesbury was defeated by a proviso which exempted James from the operation of the bill.

The plot, which had been supported for four months by the sole evidence of Oates began to hang fire at the opening of 1679; but a promise of reward brought forward a villain named Bedloe with tales beside which those of Oates seemed tame. The two informers were pressed forward by an infamous rivalry to stranger and stranger revelations. Bedloe swore to the existence of a plot for the landing of a Catholic army and a general massacre of the Protestants. Oates capped the revelations of Bedloe by charging the Queen herself at the bar of the Lords with knowledge of the plot to murder her husband. Monstrous as such charges were they revived the waning frenzy of the people and of the two Houses. The peers under arrest were ordered to be impeached. A new proclamation enjoined the arrest of every Catholic in the realm. A series of judicial murders began with the trial

Lewis and the Plot.

CHAP. II. and execution of Coleman which even now can only be remembered with horror. But the alarm must soon have worn out had it only been supported by perjury. What gave force to the false plot was the existence of a true one. Coleman's letters had won credit for the perjuries of Oates, and a fresh discovery now won credit for the perjuries of Bedloe.

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1667-1683.
—
Dissolution of the Parliament.

From the moment when the pressure of the Commons and of Danby had forced Charles into a position of seeming antagonism to France Lewis had resolved to bring about the dissolution of the Parliament, the fall of the Minister, and the disbanding of the army which Danby still looked on as a weapon against him. The aims of the Country party were the same as those of the French King, and even before the Peace of Nimegwen the French ambassador, Barillon, had succeeded in opening a correspondence on these points with its leaders, with Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Lord Russell. A closer connection was negotiated in 1678 through the mediation of Algernon Sydney; and money was entrusted to Russell and other prominent members of the Country party by Barillon to be used in the bribery which, disgraceful as it was, was now almost necessary to counteract the bribery of Danby. The confederates soon brought a more effective weapon into play. The English ambassador at Paris, Ralph Montagu, returned home on a quarrel with Danby, obtained a seat in the House of Commons, and in spite of the seizure of his papers laid on the table of the House the despatch which had been forwarded to Lewis, demanding payment for the King's services to France during the late negotiations. The Commons were thunderstruck; for strong as had been the general suspicion the fact of the dependence of England on a foreign power had never before been proved. Danby's name was signed to the despatch, and he was at once impeached on a charge of high treason. But Shaftesbury was more eager to secure the election of a new Parliament than to punish his rival, and Charles was resolved to prevent at any price a trial which could not fail to reveal

the disgraceful secret of his foreign policy. Charles was in fact at Shaftesbury's mercy, and the end for which Shaftesbury had been playing was at last secured. In January, 1679, the Parliament of 1661 after the longest unbroken life in our Parliamentary annals was at last dissolved.

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—
The New Ministry.

A new Parliament was at once summoned and its election took place in a tumult of national excitement. The process of Parliamentary corruption now took a further step. Danby had begun the bribery of members. With the election of 1679 began on a large and systematic scale the bribery or 'treating' of constituents. If members had come to realize the money value of the seats they held the voters for these members were quick to realize the money value of the seats they bestowed. "I am told," writes the Venetian ambassador, Sarotti, "that in the more conspicuous and populous places their election will cost some of the candidates five thousand scudi (about a thousand pounds) each." The new members were still for the most part Churchmen and country gentlemen, but they shared the alarm of the country, and even before their assembly in March their temper had told on the King's policy. James was sent to Brussels. Charles began to disband the army and promised that Danby should soon withdraw from office. In his speech from the throne he asked for supplies to maintain the Protestant attitude of his Government in foreign affairs. But it was impossible to avert Danby's fall. The Commons insisted on carrying his impeachment to the bar of the Lords. It was necessary to dismiss him from his post of Treasurer and to construct a new ministry. In the existing temper of the Houses such a ministry could only be found in the men who had brought about Danby's fall. Shaftesbury became President of the Council. The chiefs of the Country party, Lord Russell and Lord Cavendish, took their seats at the board with Lords Holles and Roberts, the older representatives of the Presbyterian party

CHAP. II. which had merged in the general Opposition. Savile, Lord Halifax, as yet known only as a keen and ingenious speaker, entered the ministry in the train of Shaftesbury with whom his family was connected. Lord Sunderland, a man adroit and unscrupulous but as yet ranked in the Opposition, was admitted to the Council; while Lord Essex and Lord Capel, two of the most popular among the Country leaders, went to the Treasury. The recall of Sir William Temple, the negotiator of the Triple Alliance, from his embassy at the Hague to fill the post of Secretary of State promised a foreign policy which would again place England high among the European powers.

*Temple
and his
Council.*

Temple returned with a plan of administration which, fruitless as it directly proved, is of great importance as marking the silent change which was passing over the English Constitution. Like many men of his time he was equally alarmed at the power both of the Crown and of the Parliament. In moments of national excitement the power of the Houses seemed irresistible. They had overthrown Clarendon. They had overthrown Clifford and the Cabal. They had just overthrown Danby. But though they were strong enough in the end to punish ill government they showed no power of securing good government or of permanently influencing the policy of the Crown. For nineteen years in fact with a Parliament always sitting Charles had had it pretty much his own way. He had made war against the will of the nation and he had refused to make war when the nation demanded it. While every Englishman hated France he had made England a mere dependency of the French King. The remedy for this state of things, as it was afterwards found, was a very simple one. By a change which we shall have to trace the Ministry has now become a Committee of State-officers named by the majority of the House of Commons from amongst the more prominent of its representatives in either House, whose object in accepting office is to do the will of that majority. So long as the majority of the

House of Commons itself represents the more powerful current of public opinion it is clear that such an arrangement makes government an accurate reflection of the national will. But obvious as such a plan may seem to us, it had as yet occurred to no English statesman. To Temple the one remedy seemed to lie in the restoration of the royal Council to its older powers.

This body, composed as it was of the great officers of the Court, the royal Treasurer and Secretaries, and a few nobles specially summoned to it by the sovereign, formed up to the close of Elizabeth's reign a sort of deliberative assembly to which the graver matters of public administration were commonly submitted by the Crown. A practice however of previously submitting such measures to a smaller body of the more important councillors must always have existed; and under James this secret committee, which was then known as the Cabala or Cabal, began almost wholly to supersede the Council itself. In the large and balanced Council which was formed after the Restoration all real power rested with the "Cabala" of Clarendon, Southampton, Ormond, Monk, and the two Secretaries; and on Clarendon's fall these were succeeded by Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. It was by a mere coincidence that the initials of the latter names formed the word "Cabal," which has ever since retained the sinister meaning their unpopularity gave to it. The effect of these smaller committees had undoubtedly been to remove the check which the larger numbers and the more popular composition of the royal Council laid upon the Crown. The unscrupulous projects which made the Cabal of Clifford and his fellows a byword among Englishmen could never have been laid before a Council of great peers and hereditary officers of State. To Temple therefore the organization of the Council seemed to furnish a check on mere personal government which Parliament was unable to supply. For this purpose he proposed

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*The
Cabinet.*

CHAP. II. that the Cabala or Cabinet, as it was now becoming the fashion to term the confidential committee of the Council, should be abolished. The Council itself was restricted to thirty members, and their joint income was not to fall below £300,000, a sum little less than what was estimated as the income of the whole House of Commons. A body of great nobles and proprietors, not too numerous for secret deliberation and wealthy enough to counterbalance either the Commons or the Crown, would form, Temple hoped, a barrier against the violence and aggression of the one power and a check on the mere despotism of the other.

The Habeas Corpus Act. Whatever might be the fate of these schemes the new Council and the new ministry gave fair hope of a wise and patriotic government. But the difficulties were still great. The nation was frenzied with suspicion and panic. The elections to the new Parliament had taken place amidst a whirl of excitement which left no place for candidates of the Court. The appointment of the new ministry indeed was welcomed with a general burst of joy, and its policy and that of the two Houses showed at once that a more liberal spirit had entered into public affairs. In two remarkable acts of the new Parliament English freedom made an advance even on the work of 1641. From the moment when printing began to tell on public opinion it had been gagged by a system of licenses. The regulations framed under Henry the Eighth subjected the press to the control of the Star Chamber, and the Martin Marprelate libels brought about a yet more stringent control under Elizabeth. Even the Long Parliament laid a heavy hand on the press, and the great remonstrance of Milton in his "Areopagitica" fell dead on the ears of his Puritan associates. But the statute for the regulation of printing which was passed immediately after the Restoration expired finally in 1679 and the temper of the present Parliament at once put an end to any attempt at re-establishing the censorship. To the new freedom of the press the

Habeas Corpus Act added new security for the personal freedom of every Englishman. Against arbitrary imprisonment provision had been made in the earliest ages by a famous clause in the Great Charter. No free man could be held in prison save on charge or conviction of crime or for debt; and every prisoner on a criminal charge could demand as a right from the court of King's Bench the issue of a writ of "habeas corpus," which bound his gaoler to produce both the prisoner and the warrant on which he was imprisoned that the court might judge whether he was imprisoned according to law. In cases however of imprisonment on a warrant of the royal Council it had been sometimes held by judges that the writ could not be issued, and under Clarendon's administration instances had in this way occurred of imprisonment without legal remedy. But his fall was quickly followed by the introduction of a bill to secure this right of the subject, and after a long struggle the Act which is known as the Habeas Corpus Act passed finally in the Parliament of 1679. By this great statute the old practice of the law was freed from all difficulties and exceptions. Every prisoner committed for any crime save treason or felony was declared entitled to his writ even in the vacations of the courts, and heavy penalties were enforced on judges or gaolers who refused him this right. Every person committed for felony or treason was entitled to be released on bail unless indicted at the next session of gaol delivery after his commitment, and to be discharged if not indicted at the sessions which followed. It was forbidden under the heaviest penalties to evade this operation of the writ as it had been evaded under Clarendon by sending a prisoner to any places or fortresses beyond the seas.

Great as was the value of the Habeas Corpus Act it passed almost unnoticed amidst the political storm which the ministry had to face. The question of the Succession threw all others into the shade. At the bottom of the national panic lay the dread of a Catholic King, a dread

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The Bill
of
Securities.

CHAP. II. which the after history of James fully justified. Unluckily
 The Popish on the question of the succession the new ministers were
 Plot. themselves divided. Shaftesbury was earnest for the
 1667- exclusion of James and he was followed in his plan of
 1683. exclusion by Lord Russell. Against a change in the order
 of hereditary succession however Charles was firm; and
 he was supported in his resistance by a majority of the
 Council with Temple and Lord Essex, Lord Halifax, and
 Lord Sunderland at its head. It was with the assent of
 this party that Charles brought forward a plan for pre-
 serving the rights of the Duke of York while restraining
 his powers as sovereign. By this project the presentation
 to Church livings was to be taken out of his hands on his
 accession. The last Parliament of the preceding reign was
 to continue to sit; and the appointment of all Councillors,
 Judges, Lord-Lieutenants, and officers in the fleet, was
 vested in the two Houses so long as a Catholic sovereign
 was on the throne. The extent of these provisions showed
 the pressure which Charles felt, but Shaftesbury was
 undoubtedly right in setting the plan aside as at once
 insufficient and impracticable. The one real security for
 English freedom lay in a thorough understanding between
 King and Parliament; and the scheme of Charles set them
 against one another as rival powers in the realm. It was
 impossible in fact that such a harmony could exist be-
 tween a Protestant Parliament and a Catholic sovereign.

The
 Exclusion
 Bill.

Shaftesbury therefore continued to advocate the Exclu-
 sion in the royal Council; and a bill for depriving James
 of his right to the Crown and for devolving it on the next
 Protestant in the line of succession was introduced into
 the Commons by his adherents. In spite of a powerful
 opposition from patriots like Lord Cavendish and Sir Wil-
 liam Coventry who still shrank from a change in the suc-
 cession the bill passed the House by a large majority. It
 was known that Charles would use his influence with the
 Peers for its rejection, and the Earl therefore fell back on
 the tactics of Pym. A bold Remonstrance was prepared

in the Commons. The City of London, in which Shaftes-
 bury's popularity had now risen to its greatest height, was
 ready with an address to the two Houses in favour of the
 bill. All Charles could do was to gain time by a sudden
 prorogation of the Parliament and by its dissolution at the
 end of May. But delay would have been useless had the
 Country party remained at one. The temper of the nation
 and of the House of Commons was so hotly pronounced in
 favour of the Exclusion of the Duke that but for the dis-
 union among the ministers it must in the end have been
 secured. England would then have been spared the neces-
 sity for the Revolution of 1688. Though the disunion
 grew greater and hotter indeed the wiser leaders of the
 Country party were already leaning to the very change
 which the Revolution brought about. If James were passed
 over his daughter Mary, the wife of the Prince of Orange,
 stood next in the order of succession; and the plan devised
 by Temple, Lord Essex, and Lord Halifax after the failure
 of their bill of Securities was to bring the Prince over to
 England during the prorogation, to introduce him into the
 Council, and to pave his way to the throne.

Unhappily Shaftesbury was contemplating a very different
 course. Ever since William had set aside his proposals in
 1674, and above all since his marriage with the Duke's
 daughter, Shaftesbury had looked on the Prince of Orange
 as a mere adherent of the royal house and a supporter of
 the royal plans. He saw too that firm as was William's
 Protestantism he was as jealous as Charles himself of any
 weakening of the royal power or invasion of the royal
 prerogative. Shaftesbury's keen wit was already looking
 forward to the changes which a few years were to bring
 about; and his motive for setting aside William's claims
 is probably to be found in the maxim ascribed to him,
 that "a bad title makes a good king." Whatever were
 his motives however he had resolved not only to set
 aside the claims of the Duke and the Duke's children,
 Mary and Anne, as well as William's own claim as

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grandson of Charles the First, but to place the Duke of Monmouth on the throne. Monmouth was the eldest of the King's bastards, a weak and worthless profligate in temper, but popular through his personal beauty and his reputation for bravery. The tale was set about of a secret marriage between the King and his mother which would have made him lawful heir to the throne, and Shaftesbury brought him into public notice by inducing the King to put him at the head of the troops sent to repress a rising of the extreme Covenanters which broke out at this moment in the western counties of Scotland. Monmouth showed courage in routing the insurgents at Bothwell Brig on the Clyde as well as judgment in the mercy he extended to them after their defeat; and on his return Shaftesbury pressed the King to give him the command of the Guards, which would have put the only military force possessed by the Crown in Monmouth's hands.

*Shaftes-
bury's
Second
Dis-
missal.*

Sunderland, Halifax, and Essex, on the other hand—for Temple took less and less part in public affairs—were not only steadily opposed to Shaftesbury's project, but saw themselves marked out for ruin in the event of its success. They had advised the dissolution of the last Parliament; and the Earl's anger had vented itself in threats that the advisers of the dissolution should pay for it with their heads. The danger came home to them when a sudden illness of the King and the absence of James made Monmouth's accession a possible contingency. The three ministers at once induced Charles to recall the Duke of York; and though he withdrew to Scotland on the King's recovery Charles deprived Monmouth of his charge as Captain-General of the Forces and ordered him like James to leave the realm. Left alone in his cause by the opposition of his colleagues, Shaftesbury threw himself more and more on the support of the Plot. The prosecution of its victims was pushed recklessly on. Three Catholics were hanged in London. Eight priests were put to death in the country. Pursuivants and informers spread terror through every Catholic

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household. He counted on the reassembling of the Parliament to bring all this terror to bear upon the King. But Charles had already marked the breach which the Earl's policy had made in the ranks of the Country party. He saw that Shaftesbury was unsupported by any of his colleagues save Russell. To Temple, Essex, or Halifax, it seemed possible to bring about the succession of Mary without any violent revolution; but to set aside the rights not only of James but of his Protestant children and even of the Prince of Orange was to ensure a civil war. It was with their full support therefore that Charles in October 1679 deprived Shaftesbury of his post of Lord President of the Council.

The dismissal was the signal for a struggle to whose danger Charles was far from blinding himself. What had saved him till now was his cynical courage. In the midst of the terror and panic of the Plot men "wondered to see him quite cheerful amidst such an intricacy of troubles," says the courtly Reresby, "but it was not in his nature to think or perplex himself much about anything." Even in the heat of the tumult which followed on Shaftesbury's dismissal Charles was seen fishing and sauntering as usual in Windsor Park. But closer observers than Reresby saw beneath this veil of indolent unconcern a consciousness of new danger. "From this time," says Burnet, "his temper was observed to change very visibly." He became in fact "sullen and thoughtful; he saw that he had to do with a strange sort of people, that could neither be managed nor frightened." But he faced the danger with his old unscrupulous coolness. He reopened secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as alarmed as Charles himself at the warlike temper of the nation and as anxious to prevent the calling of a Parliament; but the terms on which he offered a subsidy were too humiliating even for the King's acceptance. The failure forced him to summon a new Parliament; and the panic which Shaftesbury was busily feeding with new tales of massacre and invasion returned

*Shaftes-
bury's
struggle.*

CHAP. II. members even more violent than the members of the House
 The Popish he had just dismissed. The project of Monmouth's suc-
 Plot. cession was pressed with more daring than ever. Pam-
 1667- phlets appeared in open support of his claim. The young
 1683. Duke himself suddenly quitted Holland and reappeared at
 court; and though Charles forced him after a time to leave
 London he refused to leave England altogether. Shaftes-
 bury counted on the new Parliament to back the Duke's
 claim, and a host of petitions called on the King to suffer it
 to meet at the opening of 1680. Even the Council shrank
 from the King's proposal to prorogue its assembly to the
 coming November. But Charles prorogued it in the teeth
 of his counsellors. Alone as he stood he was firm in his re-
 solve to gain time, for time, as he saw, was working in his
 favour. The tide of public sympathy was beginning to turn.
 The perjury of Oates was proving too much at last for the
 credulity of juries; and the acquittal of four of his victims
 showed that the panic was beginning to ebb. A far
 stronger proof of this was seen in the immense efforts
 which Shaftesbury made to maintain a belief in the plot.
 Fresh informers were brought forward to swear to a con-
 spiracy for the assassination of the Earl himself and to the
 share of the Duke of York in the designs of his fellow-
 religionists. A paper found in a meal tub was produced as
 evidence of the new danger. Gigantic torchlight processions
 paraded the streets of London, and the effigy of the Pope
 was burnt amidst the wild outcry of a vast multitude.

*The
 Reaction
 Begins.*

Acts of yet greater daring showed the lengths to which
 Shaftesbury was ready to go. He had grown up amidst
 the tumults of civil war, and, greyheaded as he was, the
 fire and vehemence of his early days seemed to wake again
 in the recklessness with which he drove on the nation
 to a struggle in arms. Early in 1680 he formed a com-
 mittee for promoting agitation throughout the country;
 and the petitions which it drew up for the assembly of the
 Parliament were sent to every town and grand jury and
 sent back again with thousands of signatures. Monmouth,

in spite of the King's orders, returned at Shaftesbury's
 call to London; and a daring pamphlet pointed him out as
 the nation's leader in the coming struggle "against Popery
 and tyranny." So great was the alarm of the Council
 that the garrison in every fortress was held in readiness
 for instant war. But the danger was really less than it
 seemed. The tide of opinion had fairly turned. Acquittal
 followed acquittal. A reaction of horror and remorse at
 the cruelty which had hurried victim after victim to the
 gallows succeeded to the pitiless frenzy which Shaftesbury
 had fanned into a flame. Anxious as the nation was for
 a Protestant sovereign its sense of justice revolted against
 the wrong threatened to James's Protestant children; and
 every gentleman in the realm felt insulted at the project
 of setting Mary aside to put the crown of England on
 the head of a royal bastard.

The memory too of the Civil War was still fresh and keen
 and the rumour of an outbreak of revolt rallied men more
 and more round the King. The host of petitions which
 Shaftesbury procured from the counties was answered by a
 counter host of addresses from thousands who declared their
 "abhorrence" of the plans against the Crown; and the
 country saw itself divided into two great factions of "peti-
 tioners" and "abhorrrers," the germs of the two great parties
 which have played so prominent a part in our political
 history from the time of the Exclusion Bill. It was now
 indeed that these parties began to receive the names of
 Whig and Tory by which they were destined to be known.
 Each was originally a term of reproach. "Whig" was
 the name given to the extreme Covenanters of the west
 of Scotland, and in applying it to the members of the
 Country party the "abhorrrer" meant to stigmatize them
 as rebels and fanatics. "Tory" was at this time the name
 for a native Irish outlaw or "bogtrotter," and in fastening
 it on the loyalist adherents of James's cause the "petitioner"
 meant to brand the Duke and his party as the friends of
 Catholic rebels.

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*Peti-
 tioners
 and
 Ab-
 horrrers.*

CHAP. II. Charles at once took advantage of this turn of affairs. He recalled the Duke of York to the Court. He received the resignation of Lord Russell as well as those of Lord Cavendish and the Earl of Essex who had at last gone over to Shaftesbury's projects "with all his heart." Temple had all but withdrawn from the Council; and public affairs were now left in the hands of Lord Sunderland and Lord Halifax, of Godolphin, a laborious financier, and of Laurence Hyde, a younger son of Lord Clarendon. Shaftesbury met the King's defiance with as bold a defiance of his own. Followed by a crowd of his adherents he attended before the Grand Jury of Middlesex to indict the Duke of York as a Catholic recusant and the King's mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth, as a national nuisance, while Monmouth made a progress through the country and gained favour everywhere by his winning demeanour. Above all Shaftesbury relied on the temper of the Commons, elected as they had been in the very heat of the panic and irritated by the long delay in calling the Houses together.

*France
and
Europe.*

At this moment however a new and formidable opponent to Shaftesbury's plans presented himself in the Prince of Orange. The position of William had for some time been one of singular difficulty. He had been forced, and chiefly through the treacherous diplomacy of Charles the Second, to consent to the Treaty of Nimegwen which left France matchless in arms and dominant over Europe as she had never been before. Holland indeed was saved from the revenge of Lewis, but fresh spoils had been wrested from Spain, and Franche-Comté which had been restored at the close of the former war was retained at the end of this. Above all France overawed Europe by the daring and success with which she had faced single-handed the wide coalition against her. From the moment when the war came to an end her King's arrogance became unbounded. Lorraine was turned into a subject-state. Genoa was bombarded and its Doge forced to seek pardon in the ante-

chambers of Versailles. The Pope was humiliated by the march of an army upon Rome to avenge a slight offered to the French ambassador. The Empire was outraged by a shameless seizure of Imperial fiefs in Elsass and elsewhere which provoked remonstrances even from Charles. The whole Protestant world was defied by the increasing persecution of the Huguenots, a persecution which was to culminate in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

In the mind of Lewis peace meant a series of outrages on the powers around him; but every outrage helped the cool and silent adversary who was looking on from the Hague in his task of building up that Great Alliance of all Europe from which alone he looked for any effectual check to the ambition of France. The experience of the last war had taught William that of such an alliance England must form a part, and the efforts of the Prince ever since the peace had been directed to secure her co-operation. A reconciliation of the King with his Parliament was an indispensable step towards freeing Charles from his dependence on France, and it was such a reconciliation that William at first strove to bring about; but he was for a long time foiled by the steadiness with which Charles clung to the power whose aid was needful to carry out the schemes which he was contemplating. The change of policy however which followed on the fall of the Cabal and the entry of Danby into power raised new hopes in William's mind, and his marriage with Mary dealt Lewis what proved to be a fatal blow. James was without a son, and the marriage with Mary would at any rate ensure William the aid of England in his great enterprise on his father-in-law's death. But it was impossible to wait for that event, and though the Prince used his new position to bring Charles round to a decided policy his efforts remained fruitless. The storm of the Popish Plot complicated his position. In the earlier stages of the Exclusion Bill, when the Parliament seemed resolved simply to pass over James and to seat Mary at once on the throne after her uncle's death, William stood apart

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*William
and
England.*

CHAP. II. from the struggle, doubtful of its issue though prepared to
 The Popish accept the good luck if it came to him. But the fatal
 Plot. error of Shaftesbury in advancing the claims of Monmouth
 1667- forced him into action. To preserve his wife's right of
 1683. succession with all the great issues which were to come of
 it, as well as to secure his own, no other course was left
 than to adopt the cause of the Duke of York. Charles
 too seemed at last willing to purchase the support of the
 Prince in England by a frank adhesion to his policy abroad.
 He protested against the encroachments which Lewis was
 making in Germany. He promised aid to Holland in case
 of attack. He listened with favour to William's proposal
 of a general alliance of the European powers, and opened
 negotiations for that purpose with Brandenburg and Spain.
 William indeed believed that the one step now needed to
 bring England to his side in the coming struggle with Lewis
 was a reconciliation between Charles and the Parliament
 grounded on the plan for providing Protestant securities
 which Charles was ready again to bring forward.

William
 and the
 Exclu-
 sion.

But he still remained in an attitude of reserve when the
 Parliament at last met in October. The temper of the
 Commons was as bitter as Shaftesbury had hoped. It was
 in vain that Charles informed them of his negotiations for
 an European alliance and called on them to support him
 by reason and moderation. The House was too full of the
 sense of danger at home to heed dangers abroad. Its first
 act was to vote that its care should be "to suppress Popery
 and prevent a Popish successor." Rumours of a Catholic
 plot in Ireland were hardly needed to set aside all schemes
 of Protestant securities and to push the Exclusion Bill
 through the Commons without a division. So strong had
 Monmouth's party become that a proposal to affirm the
 rights of Mary and William by name in the Bill was
 evaded and put aside. From this moment the course of the
 Prince became clear. So resolute was the temper of the
 Lower House that even Temple and Essex now gave their
 adhesion to the Exclusion Bill as a necessity, and Sunder-

land himself wavered towards accepting it. But Halifax, whose ability and eloquence had now brought him fairly to the front, opposed it resolutely and successfully in the Lords; and Halifax was but the mouthpiece of William. "My Lord Halifax is entirely in the interest of the Prince of Orange," the French ambassador, Barillon, wrote to his master, "and what he seems to be doing for the Duke of York is really in order to make an opening for a compromise by which the Prince of Orange may benefit." The Exclusion Bill once rejected, Halifax followed up the blow by bringing forward a plan of Protestant securities which would have taken from James on his accession the right of veto on any bill passed by the two Houses, the right of negotiating with foreign states, or of appointing either civil or military officers save with the consent of Parliament. This plan, like his opposition to the Exclusion, was no doubt prompted by the Prince of Orange; and the States of Holland supported it by pressing Charles to come to an accommodation with his subjects which would enable them to check the perpetual aggressions which France was making on her neighbours.

But if the Lords would have no Exclusion Bill the Commons with as good reason would have no Securities Bill. They felt—as one of the members for London fairly put it—that such securities would break down at the very moment they were needed. A Catholic king, should he ever come to the throne, would have other forces besides those in England to back him. "The Duke rules over Scotland; the Irish and the English Papists will follow him; he will be obeyed by the officials of high and low rank whom the King has appointed; he will be just such a king as he thinks good." Shaftesbury however was far from resting in a merely negative position. He made a despairing effort to do the work of exclusion by a Bill of Divorce, which would have enabled Charles to put away his Queen on the ground of barrenness and by a fresh marriage to give a Protestant heir to the throne. The

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Trial of
 Lord
 Stafford.

CHAP. II. Earl's course shows that he felt the weakness of Monmouth's cause; and perhaps that he was already sensible of a change in public feeling. This however Shaftesbury resolved to check and turn by a great public impeachment which would revive and establish the general belief in the Plot. Lord Stafford, who from his age and rank was looked on as the leader of the Catholic party, had lain a prisoner in the Tower since the first outburst of popular frenzy. He was now solemnly impeached; and his trial in December 1680 mustered the whole staff of informers to prove the truth of a Catholic conspiracy against the King and the realm. The evidence was worthless; but the trial revived as Shaftesbury had hoped, much of the old panic, and the condemnation of the prisoner by a majority of his peers was followed by his death on the scaffold. The blow produced its effect on all but Charles. Sunderland again pressed the King to give way. But deserted as he was by his ministers and even by his mistress, for the Duchess of Portsmouth had been cowed into supporting the Exclusion by the threats of Shaftesbury, Charles was determined to resist. On the coupling of a grant of supplies with demands for a voice in the appointment of officers of the royal garrisons he prorogued the Parliament.

*Charles
turns
again to
France.*

William's policy had failed to bring the Commons round to the King's plans and Charles sullenly turned again to France. All dreams of heading Europe in her strife against Lewis were set aside. Charles became deaf to the projects of the Prince of Orange and listened to the remonstrances which James addressed to him through his favourite Churchill in favour of an alliance with the Catholic King. With characteristic subtlety however he dissolved the existing Parliament and called a new one to meet in March 1681. The act was a mere blind. The King's aim was to frighten the country into reaction by the dread of civil strife; and his summons of the Parliament to Oxford was an appeal to the country against the disloyalty of the capital and an adroit means of reviving

the memories of the Civil War. With the same end he ordered his guards to accompany him on the pretext of anticipated disorder; and Shaftesbury, himself terrified at the projects of the Court, aided the King's designs by appearing with his followers in arms on the plea of self-protection. The violence of the Earl's party only strengthened the resolution of the King. Monmouth renewed his progresses through the country, and was met by deputations and addresses in every town he visited. London was so restless that riots broke out in its streets. Revolt seemed at hand, and Charles hastened to conclude his secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as ready for an agreement as Charles. The one King verbally pledged himself to a policy of peace, in other words to withdrawal from any share in the Grand Alliance which William was building up. The other promised a small subsidy which with the natural growth of the Royal revenue sufficed to render Charles, if he remained at peace, independent of Parliamentary aids.

It was with this arrangement already concluded that Charles met his Parliament at Oxford. The members of the House of Commons were the same as those who had been returned to the Parliaments he had just dissolved, and their temper was naturally embittered by the two dissolutions. But their violence simply played into the King's hands. William's party still had hopes of bringing about a compromise; but the rejection of a new Limitation Bill brought forward by Halifax, which while conceding to James the title of King would have vested the actual functions of government in the Prince and Princess of Orange during his reign, alienated the more moderate and sensible of the Country party. They were alienated still more by a bold appeal of Shaftesbury to Charles himself to recognize Monmouth as his successor. The attempt of the Lower House to revive the panic by impeaching an informer named Fitzharris before the House of Lords, in defiance of the constitutional rule which entitled him as a commoner

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Dryden.

to a trial by his peers in the course of common law, did still more to throw public opinion on the side of the Crown. Shaftesbury's course in fact went wholly on a belief that the penury of the Treasury left Charles at his mercy, and that a refusal of supplies must wring from the King his assent to the Exclusion. But the gold of France had freed the King from his thralldom. He had used the Parliament simply to exhibit himself as a sovereign whose patience and conciliatory temper were rewarded with insult and violence; and now that his end was accomplished he no sooner saw the Exclusion Bill reintroduced into the Commons than he suddenly dissolved the Houses after but a month's sitting and appealed in a royal declaration to the justice of the nation at large.

The appeal was met by an almost universal burst of loyalty. The Church rallied to the King; his declaration was read from every pulpit; and the Universities solemnly decided that "no religion, no law, no fault, no forfeiture" could avail to bar the sacred right of hereditary succession. The arrest of Shaftesbury on a charge of suborning false witnesses to the Plot marked the new strength of the Crown. The answer of the nation at large was uttered in the first great poem of John Dryden. Born in 1631 of a good Northamptonshire family, Dryden had grown up amidst the tumult of the civil wars in a Puritan household. His grandfather, Sir Erasmus Dryden, had gone to prison at seventy rather than contribute to a forced loan. His father had been a committeeman and sequestrator under the Commonwealth. He entered life under the protection of a cousin, Sir Gilbert Pickering, who sate as one of the judges at the King's trial. Much of this early training lived in Dryden to the last. He never freed himself from the Puritan sense of religion, from the Puritan love for theological discussion and ecclesiastical controversy. Two of his greatest poems, the "Religio Laici," and the "Hind and Panther," are simply theological treatises in verse. Nor did the Commonwealth's man ever

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die in him. "All good subjects," he could say boldly in an hour of royal triumph, "abhor arbitrary power whether in one or in many;" and no writer has embodied in more pregnant words the highest claim of a people's right, that

"right supreme

To make their kings, for kings are made for them."

Dryden grew up too amidst the last echoes of the Elizabethan verse. Jonson and Massinger, Webster and Shirley, were still living men in his childhood. The lyrics of Herrick, the sweet fancies of George Herbert, were fresh in men's ears as he grew to manhood. Even when he entered into the new world of the Restoration some veterans of this nobler school, like Denham and Waller, were still lingering on the stage. The fullness and imaginative freedom of Elizabethan prose lived on till 1677 in Jeremy Taylor, while Clarendon preserved to yet later years the grandeur and stateliness of its march. Above all Milton still sate musing on the *Paradise Lost* in the tapestried chamber of his house in Bunhill Fields.

Throughout his life something of the spirit of the age which he was the last to touch lived on in Dryden. He loved and studied Chaucer and Spenser even while he was copying Molière and Corneille. His noblest panegyric was pronounced over Shakspeare. At the time when Rymer, the accepted critic of the Restoration, declared "our poetry of the last age as rude as our architecture," and sneered at "that *Paradise Lost* of Milton's which some are pleased to call a poem," Dryden saw in it "one of the greatest, most noble and sublime poems which either this age or nation hath produced." But whether in mind or in life Dryden was as unlike the Elizabethans as he was in his earlier years unlike the men of the poetic school which followed him. Of that school, the critical school as it has been called of English poetry, he was indeed the founder. He is the first of our great poets in whom "fancy is but the feather of the pen." Whether he would or no Dryden's temper was always intellectual. He was a

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and the
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poet, for if dead to the subtler and more delicate forms of imaginative delight he loved grandeur, and his amazing natural force enabled him to realize in great part the grandeur which he loved. But beneath all his poetry lay a solid bottom of reason. His wildest outbursts of passion are broken by long passages of cool argument. His heroes talk to his heroines in a serried dialectic. Every problem of morals, of religion, of politics, forces itself into his verse, and is treated there in the same spirit of critical inquiry.

His
Tragedies

In other words Dryden was the poet of his day. But he was the poet of a time of transition, and his temper is transitional. It was only by slow and uncertain steps that he advanced to the full rationalism of the Critical school. His first little poem, some verses written in 1659 on the death of Lord Hastings, is a mass of grotesque extravagances in the worst style of Donne. The dramas of his early work after the Restoration are crowded with the bombastic images, the affected conceits, the far-fetched metaphors which it is the merit of the critical school to have got rid of. In his tragedies indeed the tradition of a freer and larger time jarred against the unities and the critical rules with which he strove to bind himself. If he imitated the foreign stage he could not be blind to the fact that the Elizabethan playwrights possessed "a more masculine fancy and a greater spirit in the writing than there is in any of the French." He followed Corneille but he was haunted by memories of 'the divine Shakspeare.' His failure indeed sprang from the very truth of his poetic ideal. He could not be imaginative in the highest dramatic sense, but the need of imaginativeness pressed on him while it was ceasing to press on his brother playwrights. He could not reach the sublime, but neither could he content himself as they did with the prosaic; he rants, fumes, and talks wild bombast in the vain effort after sublimity.

His
Comedies.

Dryden failed in Comedy as he failed in Tragedy, but here the failure sprang from the very force and vigour of

his mind. He flung himself like the men of his day into the reaction against Puritanism. His life was that of a libertine; and his marriage with a woman of fashion who was yet more dissolute than himself only gave a new spur to his debaucheries. Large as was his income from the stage, and it equalled for many years the income of a country squire, he was always in debt and forced to squeeze gifts from patrons by fulsome adulation. Like the rest of the fine gentlemen about him he aired his Hobbism in sneers at the follies of religion and the squabbles of creeds. The grossness of his comedies rivalled that of Wycherley himself. But it is the very extravagance of his coarseness which shows how alien it was to the real temper of the man. A keen French critic has contrasted the libertinism of England under the Restoration with the libertinism of France, and has ruthlessly pointed out how the gaiety, the grace, the naturalness of the one disappears in the forced, hard, brutal brilliancy of the other. The contrast is a just one. The vice of the English libertine was hard and unnatural just because his real nature took little share in it. In sheer revolt against the past he was playing a part which was not his own and which he played badly, which he forced and exaggerated, just because it was not his own. Dryden scoffs at priests and creeds, but his greater poetry is coloured throughout with religion. He plays the rake, but the two pictures which he has painted with all his heart are the pictures of the honest country squire and the poor country parson. He passes his rivals in the grossness of his comedies, he flings himself recklessly into the evil about him because it is the fashion and because it pays. But he cannot sport lightly and gaily with what is foul. He is driven if he is coarse at all to be brutally coarse. His freedom of tone, to borrow Scott's fine remark, is like the forced impudence of a timid man.

Slowly but ceaselessly however the critical taste of his time told on Dryden. The poetry of good sense, as it

CHAP. II.
The Popish
Plot.
1667-
1683.

The New
Criticism.

CHAP. II. proudly called itself, triumphed in Boileau, and the rules of taste and form which Boileau laid down were accepted as the law of letters on the one side of the Channel as well as on the other. Andrew Marvell, in whom the older imaginative beauty still found a worshipper, stood alone in his laughter at the degradation of poetry into prose. Fancy was set aside for reason, "that substantial useful part which gains the head, while Fancy wins the heart." It was the head and not the heart that poetry now cared to gain. But with all its prose the new criticism did a healthy work in insisting on clearness, simplicity, and good sense. In his "Rehearsal" Buckingham quizzed fairly enough the fume and bombast of Dryden's tragedies. But Dryden was already echoing his critics' prayer for a year "of prose and sense." He was tired of being "the Sisyphus of the stage, to roll up a stone with endless labour, which is perpetually falling down again." "To the stage," he owned, "my genius never much inclined me," and he had long had dreams, stirred no doubt by his admiration for Milton, of undertaking some epic story. But need held him to the boards and years passed by, and Dryden still stood in the second rank of English poetry, outdone in comedy by men like Etherege and rivalled in tragedy by men like Settle. Only in a single poem, that of the "Annus Mirabilis," in 1671, had he given any true indications of his surpassing powers.

Dryden
and the
Plot.

It was in this mood of failure and disappointment that the Popish Plot found him. Of its reality he made no question; "a plot," he says emphatically, "there was." But his cool good sense saw how the truth had been "dashed and brewed with lies." What stirred him more was, as he believed, the return of anarchy. Puritan as his training had been he had grown up like the bulk of the men about him with a horror of the social and religious disorders which the civil war had brought in its train. He clung to authority as a security against revolution. It was this that drove him from the Puritanism of his youth to the Anglican dogmatism of the "Religio Laici," and from thence to the tempered

Catholicism of the "Hind and Panther." It was this which made him sing by turns the praises of Cromwell and the praises of the King whom Cromwell had hunted from one refuge to another. No man denounced the opponents of the crown with more ruthless invective. No man humbled himself before the throne with more fulsome adulation. Some of this no doubt was mere flattery, but not all of it. Dryden like his age was conscious that new currents of feeling and opinion were sweeping him from the old moorings of mankind. But he shrank in terror from the wide ocean over whose waters he drifted. In religion, he was a rationalist, a sceptic, whether he would or no; but he recoiled from the maze of "anxious thoughts" which spread before him, of thoughts "that in endless circles roll without a centre where to fix the soul," and clung to the Church that would give him, if not peace, at least quiet. In politics he was as much a rationalist as in religion, but he turned horrorstruck from the sight of a "state drawn to the dregs of a democracy," and in the crisis of the Popish Plot he struck blindly for the crown.

Dryden like the royalists generally believed that the arrest of Shaftesbury had alone saved England from civil war, and from that worst of civil wars where a son fights against his father's throne. In his "Absalom and Ahitophel" the poet told the story of the threatened strife under the thin veil of the revolt against David. Charles was the Hebrew king, Monmouth was Absalom, Shaftesbury was the wily Ahitophel who drew him into revolt. The "Absalom" was a satire, and it was the first great English satire, for the satires of Marston and Hall were already forgotten. It is in ages indeed like the Restoration that satire naturally comes to the front. In the reaction after a time of high ideals and lofty efforts the sense of contrast between the aims and the powers of man, between his hopes and their fulfilment, takes form whether in the kindly pitifulness of humour or in the bitter revulsion of satire. And mingled with this in Dryden was an honest indignation at

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"Absalom
and
Ahitophel."

CHAP. II. the hypocrisy around him. The men he attacks are not real men but actors. Buckingham and Shaftesbury, the infidel leader of the Independents and the deistical leader of the Presbyterians, were alike playing a part. But the largeness and fairness of his temper saved Dryden's satire from the vicious malignity of that of Pope. He has an artistic love of picturesque contrast, he has a great writer's pride in the consciousness of power. But he has no love of giving pain for the mere pain's sake, and he has a hatred of unfairness. Even in his contempt for the man he is just to Buckingham, and his anger does not blind him to the great qualities of Shaftesbury.

*Progress
of the
Reaction.*

The even and effortless force of the poem, the disappearance of inequalities and faults of taste, showed that Dryden was at last master of his powers. But it was not this nervous strength alone which suddenly brought him to the forefront of English letters. It was the general sense that his "Absalom" was the opening of a new literary development. Its verse, free from the old poetic merits as from the old poetic faults, clear, nervous, condensed, argumentative, proclaimed the final triumph of the "poetry of good sense." Its series of portraits showed the new interest in human character which had been stirred by the Civil War, and which was deepening with the growing indifference to larger thoughts of nature and the growing concentration of man's thoughts on man. They led the way to that delight in the analysis of character in its lowest as in its highest forms which produced the essayists and the novel. Above all the "Absalom" was the first work in which literature became a great political power. In it Dryden showed himself the precursor of Swift and of Bolingbroke, of Burke and of Cobbett. The poem was bought eagerly, and it undoubtedly helped to bring about that triumph of the King with the prophecy of which it closed. But prisoner as Shaftesbury was, the struggle with him was not yet over. London was still true to him; only a few days after the appearance of

the "Absalom and Ahitophel" the Middlesex Grand Jury ignored the bill of his indictment, and his discharge from the Tower was welcomed in every street with bonfires and ringing of bells. But a fresh impulse was given to the loyal enthusiasm of the country at large by the publication of a plan said to have been found among his papers, the plan of a secret association for the furtherance of the Exclusion whose members bound themselves to obey the orders of Parliament even after its prorogation or dissolution by the Crown. So general was the reaction that Halifax who had now become the most conspicuous member of the royal Council, though scared by the Whig threats of impeachment, advised the calling of a new Parliament in the belief that it would be a loyal one. William of Orange too visited England to take advantage of the turn of affairs to pin Charles to the policy of the Alliance.

The King met both counsels with evasion. He kept his own secret. Hyde was the only one of his ministers whom he had trusted with the knowledge of his French negotiations and they remained as unknown to William as to Halifax. But their effect was seen in the new vigour which Lewis gave to his policy at home and abroad. He was resolved to bring about national unity by crushing the French Protestants, to gain a strong frontier to the East, and to be ready to seize the Spanish heritage on the death of Charles the Fourth. The agreement was no sooner made with Charles than persecution fell heavy on the Huguenots; and the seizure of Strassburg and Casale, the keys of Germany and Italy, with that of Luxemburg, the key of the United Provinces, brought Europe to the verge of war. Charles, indeed, was anxious to avoid war and he was as anxious to avoid Parliaments whose assembly war would certainly force upon him as Lewis himself. The tide of loyal reaction was mounting in fact higher every day. The King secured the adhesion of the Church by a renewed

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*Shaftes-
bury's
Death.*

CHAP. II.
The Popish
Plot.
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persecution of the Nonconformists which drove Penn from England and thus brought about the settlement of Pennsylvania as a refuge for his fellow-Quakers. He was soon strong enough to call back James to Court and to arrest Monmouth who had resumed his almost royal progresses as a means of again stirring opinion in his favour. London alone remained firm for the Whigs; but the friendship of a Tory mayor secured the nomination of Tory sheriffs in the summer of 1682, and the juries they packed left the life of every Exclusionist at the mercy of the Crown. Shaftesbury saw himself threatened with ruin. It was in vain that he offered to waive his plans of exclusion and to fall in with the King's older proposals of a limited monarchy in the case of James's accession. The loss of London left him without a shelter and drove him to wild conspiracies with a handful of adventurers who were as desperate as himself. He hid himself in the City where he boasted that ten thousand "brisk boys" were ready to appear at his call. From his hiding-place he urged his friends to rise in arms. But their delays drove him to flight; and in January 1683, two months after his arrival in Holland, the soul of the great leader, great from his immense energy and the wonderful versatility of his genius, but whose genius and energy had ended in wrecking for the time the fortunes of English freedom and in associating the noblest of causes with the vilest of crimes, found its first quiet in death.

The Rye-
House
Plot.

The flight of Shaftesbury proclaimed the triumph of the King. His marvellous sagacity had told him when the struggle was over and further resistance useless. But the country leaders who had delayed to answer the Earl's call still believed opposition possible, and looked for support to the discontent of the Nonconformists at the revival of the penal laws. Monmouth, with Lord Essex, Lord Howard of Ettrick, Lord Russell, Hampden, and Algernon Sidney, held meetings with the view of founding an association whose agitation should force on the King the assembly of a Parliament. The more desperate spirits who had clus-

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tered round Shaftesbury as he lay hidden in the City took refuge in plots of assassination and in a plan for murdering Charles and his brother as they passed the Rye-house on the road from London to Newmarket. Both projects were betrayed, and though they were wholly distinct from one another the cruel ingenuity of the Crown lawyers blended them into one. Lord Essex saved himself from a traitor's death by suicide in the Tower. Lord Russell, convicted on a charge of sharing in the Rye-house plot, was beheaded on the 21st of July 1683, in front of his father the Earl of Bedford's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The same fate awaited Algernon Sydney. Monmouth fled in terror over sea, and his flight was followed by a series of prosecutions for sedition directed against his followers.

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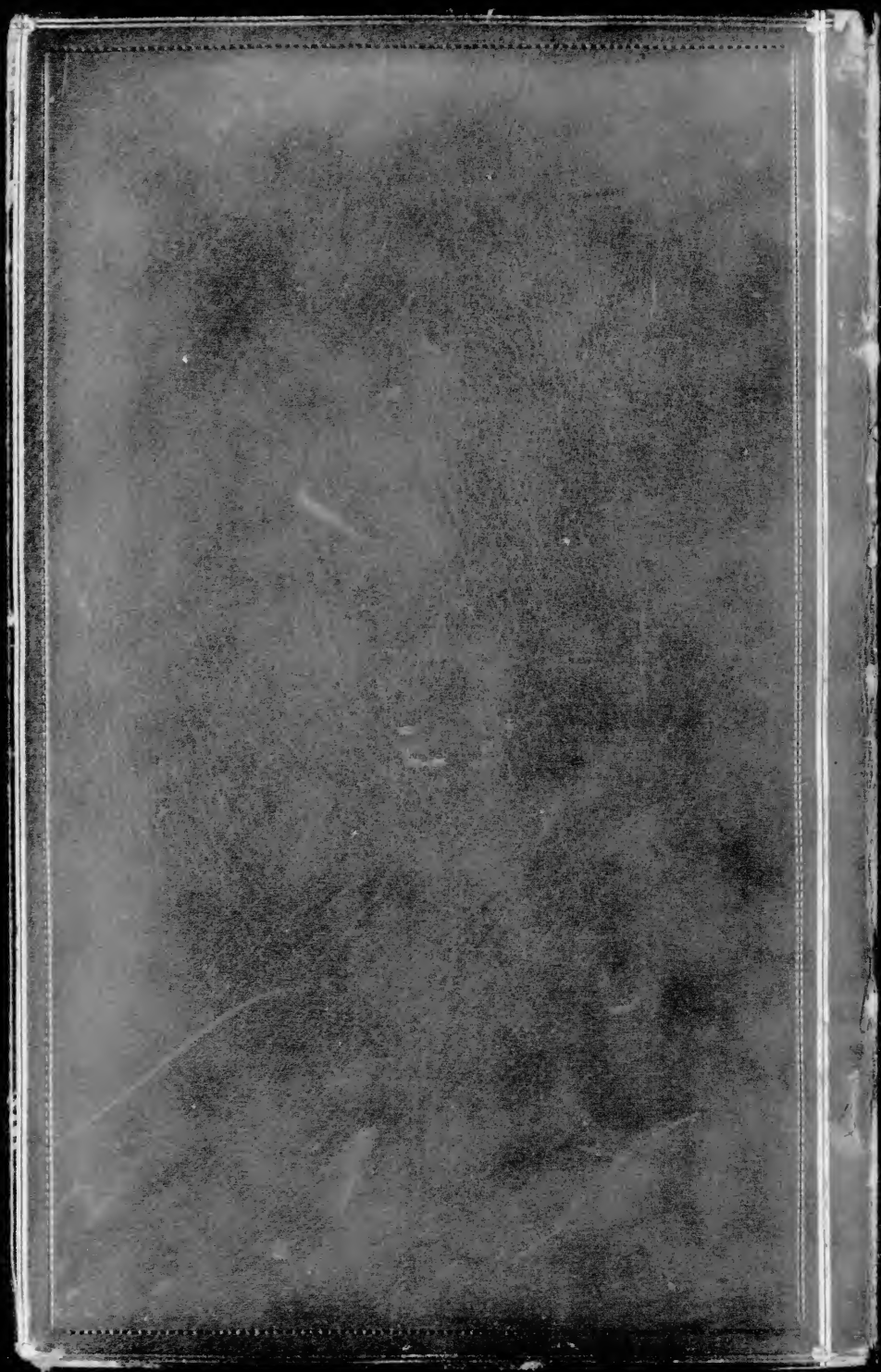
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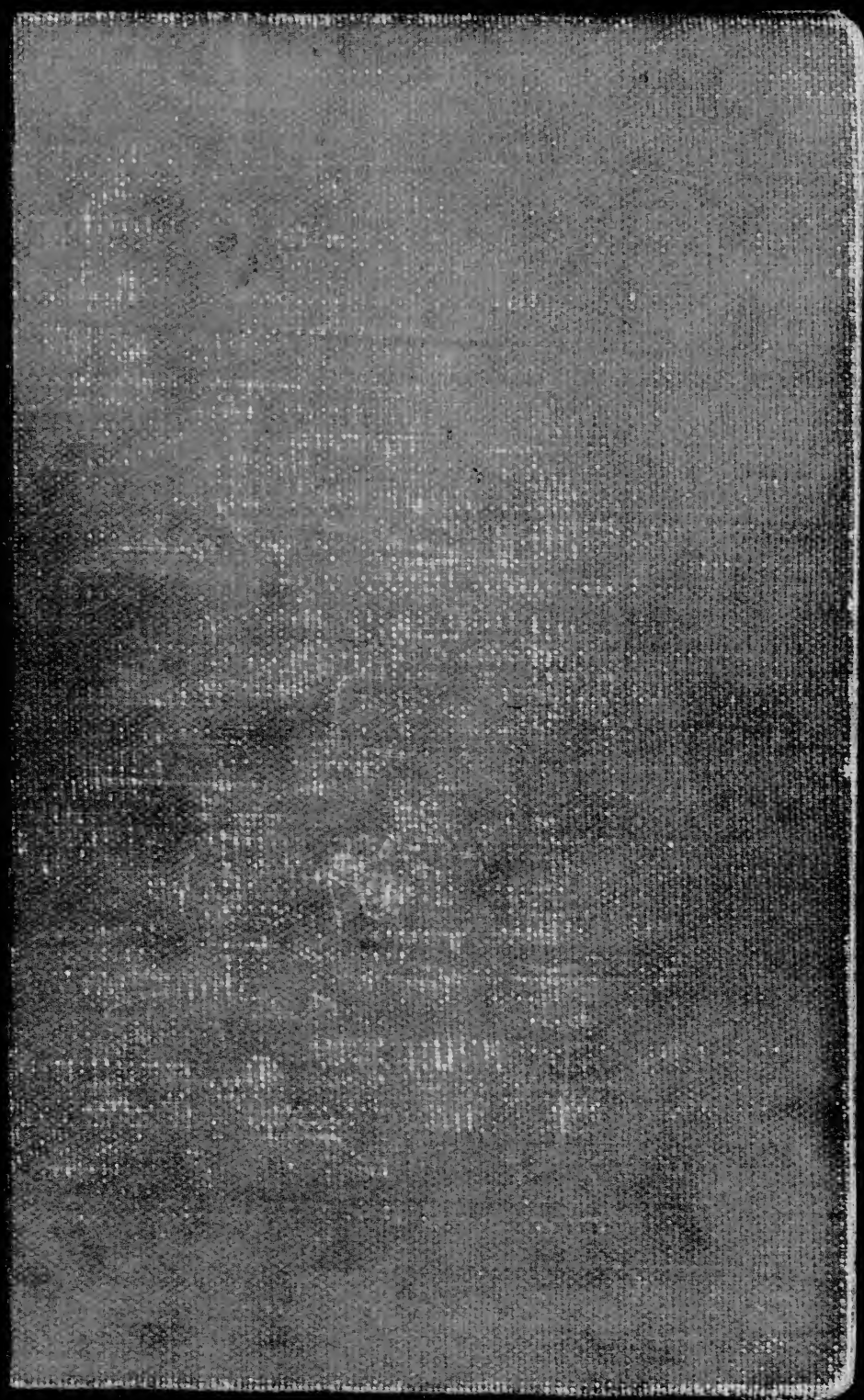
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HISTORY
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VOLUME IV.

The Revolution. 1683-1760.
Modern England. 1760-1815.

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BOOK VIII.

THE REVOLUTION—(Continued).

1660—1760.

CHAPTER III.

THE FALL OF THE STUARTS, 1683—1714.

IN 1683 the Constitutional opposition which had held Charles so long in check lay crushed at his feet. A weaker man might easily have been led to play the mere tyrant by the mad outburst of loyalty which greeted his triumph. On the very day when the crowd around Russell's scaffold were dipping their handkerchiefs in his blood as in the blood of a martyr the University of Oxford solemnly declared that the doctrine of passive obedience even to the worst of rulers was a part of religion. But Charles saw that immense obstacles still lay in the road of a mere tyranny. Ormond and the great Tory party which had rallied to his succour against the Exclusionists were still steady for parliamentary and legal government. The Church was as powerful as ever, and the mention of a renewal of the Indulgence to Nonconformists had to be withdrawn before the opposition of the bishops. He was careful therefore during the few years which remained to him to avoid the appearance of any open violation of public law. He suspended no statute. He imposed no tax by Royal authority. Galling to the Crown as the freedom of the press and the Habeas Corpus Act were soon found to be, Charles made no attempt to curtail the one or to infringe the other.

*The
King's
Triumph.*

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of the
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But while cautious to avoid rousing popular resistance, he moved coolly and resolutely forward on the path of despotism. It was in vain that Halifax pressed for energetic resistance to the aggressions of France, for the recall of Monmouth, or for the calling of a fresh Parliament. Like every other English statesman he found he had been duped. Now that his work was done he was suffered to remain in office but left without any influence in the government. Hyde, who was created Earl of Rochester, still remained at the head of the Treasury; but Charles soon gave more of his confidence to the supple and acute Sunderland, who atoned for his desertion of the King's cause in the heat of the Exclusion Bill by an acknowledgment of his error and a pledge of entire accordance with the King's will.

New
Town
Charters.

The protests both of Halifax and of Danby, who was now released from the Tower, in favour of a return to Parliaments were treated with indifference, the provisions of the Triennial Act were disregarded, and the Houses remained unassembled during the remainder of the King's reign. His secret alliance with France furnished Charles with the funds he immediately required, and the rapid growth of the customs through the increase of English commerce promised to give him a revenue which, if peace were preserved, would save him from any further need of fresh appeals to the Commons. Charles was too wise however to look upon Parliaments as utterly at an end: and he used this respite to secure a House of Commons which should really be at his disposal. The strength of the Country party had been broken by its own dissensions over the Exclusion Bill and by the flight or death of its more prominent leaders. Whatever strength it retained lay chiefly in the towns, whose representation was for the most part virtually or directly in the hands of their corporations, and whose corporations, like the merchant class generally, were in sympathy Whig. The towns were now attacked by writs of "quo warranto," which called on them to show cause

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why their charters should not be declared forfeited on the ground of abuse of their privileges. A few verdicts on the side of the Crown brought about a general surrender of municipal liberties; and the grant of fresh charters, in which all but ultra-loyalists were carefully excluded from their corporations, placed the representation of the boroughs in the hands of the Crown. Against active discontent Charles had long been quietly providing by the gradual increase of his Guards. The withdrawal of its garrison from Tangier enabled him to raise their force to nine thousand well-equipped soldiers, and to supplement this force, the nucleus of our present standing army, by a reserve of six regiments which were maintained till they should be needed at home in the service of the United Provinces.

Death of
Charles.

But great as the danger really was it lay not so much in isolated acts of tyranny as in the character and purpose of Charles himself, and his death at the very moment of his triumph saved English freedom. He had regained his old popularity; and at the news of his sickness in the spring of 1685 crowds thronged the churches, praying that God would raise him up again to be a father to his people. But while his subjects were praying the one anxiety of the King was to die reconciled to the Catholic Church. His chamber was cleared, and a priest named Huddleston, who had saved his life after the battle of Worcester, received his confession and administered the last sacraments. Not a word of this ceremony was whispered when the nobles and bishops were recalled into the royal presence, and Charles though steadily refusing the communion which Bishop Ken offered him accepted the bishop's absolution. All the children of his mistresses save Monmouth were gathered round the bed, and Charles commended them to his brother's protection by name. The scene which followed is described by a chaplain to one of the prelates who stood round the dying King. Charles "blessed all his children one by one, pulling them on to his bed; and then the bishops moved him, as he was the Lord's anointed and

CHAP. III. the father of his country, to bless them also and all that
 The Fall were there present, and in them the general body of his
 of the subjects. Whereupon, the room being full, all fell down
 Stuarts. upon their knees, and he raised himself in his bed and
 1683- very solemnly blessed them all." The strange comedy was
 1714. at last over. Charles died as he had lived: brave, witty,
 cynical, even in the presence of death. Tortured as he
 was with pain, he begged the bystanders to forgive him for
 being so unconscionable a time in dying. One mistress,
 the Duchess of Portsmouth, hung weeping over his bed.
 His last thought was of another mistress, Nell Gwynn.
 "Do not," he whispered to his successor ere he sank into a
 fatal stupor, "do not let poor Nelly starve!"

*James the
 Second.*

The death of Charles in February 1685 placed his
 brother James, the Duke of York, upon the throne. His
 character and policy were already well known. Of all the
 Stuart rulers James is the only one whose intellect was
 below mediocrity. His mind was dull and narrow though
 orderly and methodical; his temper dogged and arbitrary
 but sincere. His religious and political tendencies had
 always been the same. He had always cherished an entire
 belief in the royal authority and a hatred of Parliaments.
 His main desire was for the establishment of Catholicism
 as the only means of ensuring the obedience of his
 people; and his old love of France was quickened by
 the firm reliance which he placed on the aid of Lewis in
 bringing about that establishment. But the secrecy in
 which his political action had as yet been shrouded and
 his long absence from England had hindered any general
 knowledge of his designs. His first words on his accession,
 his promise to "preserve this Government both in
 Church and State as it is now by law established," were
 welcomed by the whole country with enthusiasm. All
 the suspicions of a Catholic sovereign seemed to have
 disappeared. "We have the word of a King!" ran the
 general cry, "and of a King who was never worse than
 his word." The conviction of his brother's faithlessness

in fact stood James in good stead. He was looked upon
 as narrow, impetuous, stubborn, and despotic in heart,
 but even his enemies did not accuse him of being false.
 Above all, incredible as such a belief may seem now, he
 was believed to be keenly alive to the honour of his
 country and resolute to free it from foreign dependence.

From the first indeed there were indications that James
 understood his declaration in a different sense from the
 nation. He was resolved to make no disguise of his
 own religion; the chapel in which he had hitherto wor-
 shipped with closed doors was now thrown open and the
 King seen at mass. He regarded attacks on his faith as
 attacks on himself, and at once called on the Archbishop
 of Canterbury and the Bishop of London to hinder all
 preaching against Catholicism as a part of their "duty" to
 their King. He made no secret of his resolve to procure
 freedom of worship for his co-religionists while still re-
 fusing it to the rest of the Nonconformists, whom he
 hated as republicans and Exclusionists. All was passed
 over however in the general confidence. It was necessary
 to summon a Parliament, for the royal revenue ceased
 with the death of Charles; but the elections, swayed at
 once by the tide of loyalty and by the command of the
 boroughs which the surrender of their charters had given
 to the Crown, sent up in May a House of Commons in
 which James found few members who were not to his
 mind. His appointment indeed of Catholic officers in
 the army was already exciting murmurs; but these were
 hushed as James repeated his pledge of maintaining the
 established order both in Church and State. The ques-
 tion of religious security was waived at a hint of the
 royal displeasure, and a revenue of nearly two millions was
 granted to the King for life.

All that was wanted to rouse the loyalty of the country
 into fanaticism was supplied by a rebellion in the North,
 and by another under Monmouth in the West. The hopes
 of Scotch freedom had clung ever since the Restoration to

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*James
 and Par-
 liament.*

*Argyle's
 Rising.*

CHAP. III. the house of Argyle. The great Marquis indeed had been brought to the block at the King's return. His son, the Earl of Argyle, had been unable to save himself even by a life of singular caution and obedience from the ill-will of the vile politicians who governed Scotland. He was at last convicted of treason in 1682 on grounds at which every English statesman stood aghast. "We should not hang a dog here," Halifax protested, "on the grounds on which my lord Argyle has been sentenced to death." The Earl escaped however to Holland, and lived peaceably there during the last six years of the reign of Charles. Monmouth had found the same refuge at the Hague, where a belief in his father's love and purpose to recall him secured him a kindly reception from William of Orange. But the accession of James was a death-blow to the hopes of the Duke, while it stirred the fanaticism of Argyle to a resolve of wresting Scotland from the rule of a Catholic king. The two leaders determined to appear in arms in England and the North, and the two expeditions sailed within a few days of each other. Argyle's attempt was soon over. His clan of the Campbells rose on the Earl's landing in Cantyre, but the country had been occupied for the King, and quarrels among the exiles who accompanied him robbed his effort of every chance of success. His force scattered without a fight; and Argyle, arrested in an attempt to escape, was hurried on the 30th of June to a traitor's death.

Monmouth's Rising.

Monmouth for a time found brighter fortune. His popularity in the West was great, and though the gentry held aloof when he landed at Lyme and demanded an effective parliamentary government as well as freedom of worship for Protestant Nonconformists the farmers and traders of Devonshire and Dorset flocked to his standard. The clothier-towns of Somerset were true to the Whig cause, as they had been true to the cause of the Long Parliament; and on the entrance of the Duke into Taunton the popular enthusiasm showed itself in the

flowers which wreathed every door, as well as in a train of young girls who presented Monmouth with a Bible and a flag. His forces now amounted to six thousand men, but whatever chance of success he might have had was lost by his assumption of the title of king, his right to which he had pledged himself hitherto to leave for decision to a free Parliament. The two Houses offered to support James with their lives and fortunes, and passed a bill of attainder against the Duke. The gentry, still true to the cause of Mary and of William, held stubbornly aloof; while the Guards and the regiments from Tangier hurried to the scene of the revolt and the militia gathered to the royal standard. Foiled in an attempt on Bristol and Bath, Monmouth fell back on Bridgewater, and flung himself in the night of the 6th of July on the King's forces as they lay encamped hard by on Sedgemoor. The surprise failed; and the brave peasants and miners who followed the Duke, checked in their advance by a deep drain which crossed the moor, were broken after a short but desperate resistance by the royal horse. Their leader fled from the field, and after a vain effort to escape from the realm was captured and sent pitilessly to the block.

Never had England shown a firmer loyalty; but its loyalty was changed into horror by the terrible measures of repression which followed on the victory of Sedgemoor. Even North, the Lord Keeper, a servile tool of the Crown, protested against the license and bloodshed in which the troops were suffered to indulge after the battle. His protest however was disregarded, and he withdrew broken-hearted from the Court to die. James was in fact resolved on a far more terrible vengeance; and the Chief-Justice Jeffreys, a man of great natural powers but of violent temper, was sent to earn the Seals by a series of judicial murders which have left his name a byword for cruelty. Three hundred and fifty rebels were hanged in what has ever since been known as the "Bloody Circuit," while Jeffreys made his way through Dorset and Somerset.

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1714.

*The
Bloody
Circuit.*

CHAP. III. More than eight hundred were sold into slavery beyond sea. A yet larger number were whipped and imprisoned. The Queen, the maids of honour, the courtiers, even the Judge himself, made shameless profit from the sale of pardons. What roused pity above all were the cruelties wreaked upon women. Some were scourged from market-town to market-town. Mrs. Iisle, the wife of one of the Regicides, was sent to the block at Winchester for harbouring a rebel. Elizabeth Gaunt for the same act of womanly charity was burned at Tyburn. Pity turned into horror when it was found that cruelty such as this was avowed and sanctioned by the King. Even the cold heart of General Churchill, to whose energy the victory at Sedgemoor had mainly been owing, revolted at the ruthlessness with which James turned away from all appeals for mercy. "This marble," he cried as he struck the chimney-piece on which he leant, "is not harder than the King's heart."

*James
and
France.*

But it was soon plain that the terror which this butchery was meant to strike into the people was part of a larger purpose. The revolt was made a pretext for a vast increase of the standing army. Charles, as we have seen, had silently and cautiously raised it to nearly ten thousand men; James raised it at one swoop to twenty thousand. The employment of this force was to be at home, not abroad, for the hope of an English policy in foreign affairs had already faded away. In the designs which James had at heart he could look for no consent from Parliament; and however his pride revolted against a dependence on France, it was only by French gold and French soldiers that he could hope to hold the Parliament permanently at bay. A week therefore after his accession he assured Lewis that his gratitude and devotion to him equalled that of Charles himself. "Tell your master," he said to the French ambassador, "that without his protection I can do nothing. He has a right to be consulted, and it is my wish to consult him, about everything." The pledge of

subservience was rewarded with the promise of a subsidy, and the promise was received with the strongest expressions of delight and servility. The hopes which the Prince of Orange had conceived from his father-in-law's more warlike temper were nipped by a refusal to allow him to visit England. All the caution and reserve of Charles the Second in his dealings with France was set aside. Sunderland, the favourite Minister of the new King as he had been of the old, not only promised during the session to avoid the connection with Spain and Holland which the Parliament was known to desire, but "to throw aside the mask and openly break with them as soon as the royal revenue is secured." The support indeed which James needed was a far closer and firmer support than his brother had sought for. Lewis on the other hand trusted him as he could never trust Charles. His own bigotry understood the bigotry of the new sovereign. "The confirmation of the King's authority and the establishment of religion," he wrote, "are our common interest;" and he promised that James should "find in his friendship all the resources which he can expect."

Never had the secret league with France seemed so full of danger to English religion. Europe had long been trembling at the ambition of Lewis; it was trembling now at his bigotry. He had proclaimed warfare against civil liberty in his attack upon Holland; he declared war at this moment upon religious freedom by revoking the Edict of Nantes, the measure by which Henry the Fourth after his abandonment of Protestantism secured toleration and the free exercise of their worship for his Protestant subjects. It had been respected by Richelieu even in his victory over the Huguenots, and only lightly tampered with by Mazarin. But from the beginning of his reign Lewis had resolved to set aside its provisions, and his revocation of it at the end of 1685 was only the natural close of a progressive system of persecution. The revocation was followed by outrages more cruel than even the bloodshed of Alva. Dragoons

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were quartered on Protestant families, women were flung from their sick beds into the streets, children were torn from their mothers' arms to be brought up in Catholicism, ministers were sent to the galleys. In spite of the royal edicts which forbade even flight to the victims of these horrible atrocities a hundred thousand Protestants fled over the borders, and Holland, Switzerland, the Palatinate, were filled with French exiles. Thousands found refuge in England, and their industry established in the fields east of London the silk trade of Spitalfields.

But while Englishmen were looking with horror on these events in France James was taking advantage of the position in which as he believed they placed him. The news of the revocation drew from James expressions of delight. The rapid increase of the conversions to Catholicism which followed on the "dragonnades" raised in him hopes of as general an apostasy in his own dominions. His tone took a new haughtiness and decision. He admitted more Catholic officers into his fresh regiments. He dismissed Halifax from the Privy Council on his refusal to consent to a plan for repealing the Test Act. He met the Parliament on its reassembling in November with a haughty declaration that whether legal or no his grant of commissions to Catholics must not be questioned, and with a demand of supplies for his new troops. Loyal as was the temper of the Houses, their alarm for the Church, their dread of a standing army, was yet stronger than their loyalty. The Commons by the majority of a single vote deferred the grant of supplies till grievances were redressed, and demanded in their address the recall of the illegal commissions on the ground that the continuance of the Catholic officers in their posts "may be taken to be a dispensing with that law without Act of Parliament." The Lords took a bolder tone; and the protest of the bishops against any infringement of the Test Act expressed by Bishop Compton of London was backed by the eloquence of Halifax. Their desire for conciliation indeed was shown

in an offer to confirm the existing officers in their posts by Act of Parliament, and even to allow fresh nominations of Catholics by the King under the same security. But James had no wish for such a compromise, and the Houses were at once prorogued.

The King resolved to obtain from the judges what he could not obtain from Parliament. He remodelled the bench by dismissing four judges who refused to lend themselves to his plans; and in the June of 1686 their successors decided in the case of Sir Edward Hales, a Catholic officer in the army, that a royal dispensation could be pleaded in bar of the Test Act. The principle laid down by the judges "that it is a privilege inseparably connected with the sovereignty of the King to dispense with penal laws, and that according to his own judgment," was applied by James with a reckless impatience of all decency and self-restraint. Catholics were admitted into civil and military offices without stint, and four Catholic peers were sworn as members of the Privy Council. The laws which forbade the presence of Catholic priests in the realm or the open exercise of Catholic worship were set at naught. A gorgeous chapel was opened in the palace of St. James for the use of the King. Carmelites, Benedictines, Franciscans, appeared in their religious garb in the streets of London, and the Jesuits set up a crowded school in the Savoy. The quick growth of discontent at these acts would have startled a wiser man into prudence, but James prided himself on an obstinacy which never gave way; and a riot which took place on the opening of a Catholic chapel in the City was followed by the establishment of a camp of thirteen thousand men at Hounslow to overawe the capital.

The course which James intended to follow in England was shown indeed by the course he was following in the sister kingdoms. In Scotland he acted as a pure despot. At the close of Charles's reign the extreme Covenanters or "wild Whigs" of the Western shires had formally re-

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CHAP. III. nounced their allegiance to a "prelatical" King. A smouldering revolt spread over the country that was only held in check by the merciless cruelties with which the royal troops avenged the "rabbling of priests" and the outrages committed by the Whigs on the more prominent persecutors. Such a revolt threw strength into the hands of the government by rallying to its side all who were bent on public order, and this strength was doubled by the landing and failure of Argyle. The Scotch Parliament granted excise and customs not to the King only but to his successors, while it confirmed the Acts which established religious conformity. But James was far from being satisfied with a loyalty which made no concession to the "king's religion." He placed the government of Scotland in the hands of two lords, Melfort and Perth, who had embraced his own faith, and put a Catholic in command of the Castle of Edinburgh. The drift of these measures was soon seen. The Scotch Parliament had as yet been the mere creature of the Crown, but servile as were its members there was a point at which their servility stopped. When James boldly required them to legalize the toleration of Catholics they refused to pass such an Act. It was in vain that the King tempted them to consent by the offer of a free trade with England. "Shall we sell our God?" was the indignant reply. James at once ordered the Scotch judges to treat all laws against Catholics as null and void, and his orders were obeyed. In Ireland his policy threw off even the disguise of law. Catholics were admitted by the King's command to the Council and to civil offices. A Catholic, Lord Tyrconnell, was put at the head of the army, and set instantly about its re-organization by cashiering Protestant officers and by admitting two thousand Catholic natives into its ranks.

*The High
Commis-
sion.*

Meanwhile in England James was passing from the mere attempt to secure freedom for his fellow-religionists to a bold and systematic attack upon the Church. He had at the outset of his reign forbidden the clergy to preach

against "the king's religion;" and ordered the bishops to act upon this prohibition. But no steps were taken by them to carry out this order; and the pulpits of the capital soon rang with controversial sermons. For such a sermon James now called on Compton, the Bishop of London, to suspend Dr. Sharp, the rector of St. Giles'-in-the-Fields. Compton answered that as judge he was ready to examine into the case if brought before him according to law. To James the matter was not one of law but of prerogative. He regarded his ecclesiastical supremacy as a weapon providentially left to him for undoing the work which it had enabled his predecessors to do. Under Henry and Elizabeth it had been used to turn the Church of England from Catholic to Protestant. Under James it might be used to turn the Church back again from Protestant to Catholic. The High Commission indeed which had enforced this supremacy had been declared illegal by an Act of the Long Parliament, and this Act had been confirmed by the Parliament of the Restoration. But it was thought possible to evade this Act by omitting from the instructions on which the Commission acted the extraordinary powers and jurisdictions by which its predecessor had given offence. With this reserve, seven commissioners were appointed in the summer of 1686 for the government of the Church with the Chancellor, Lord Jeffreys, at their head. The first blow of the Commission was at the Bishop of London whose refusal to suspend Sharp was punished by his own suspension. But the pressure of the Commission only drove the clergy to a bolder defiance of the royal will. The legality of the Commission and of its proceedings was denied. Not even the Pope, it was said, had claimed such rights over the conduct and jurisdiction of English bishops as were claimed by the King. The prohibition of attacks on the "king's religion" was set at nought. Sermons against superstition were preached from every pulpit; and the two most famous divines of the day, Tillotson and Stillingfleet, put themselves at the head of a host of

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It was in vain that the bulk of the Catholic gentry stood aloof and predicted the inevitable reaction which the King's course must bring about, or that Rome itself counselled greater moderation. James was infatuated with what seemed to be the success of his enterprises. He looked on the opposition he experienced as due to the influence of the High Church Tories who had remained in power since the reaction of 1681, and these he determined "to chastise." The Duke of Queensberry, the leader of this party in Scotland, was driven from office. Tyrconnell, as we have seen, was placed as a check on Ormond in Ireland. In England James resolved to show the world that even the closest ties of blood were as nothing to him if they conflicted with the demands of his faith. His earlier marriage with Anne Hyde, the daughter of Clarendon, bound both the Chancellor's sons to his fortunes; and on his accession he had sent his elder brother-in-law, Edward, Earl of Clarendon, as Lord-Lieutenant to Ireland, and raised the younger, Laurence, Earl of Rochester, who had long been a minister under Charles the Second, to the post of Lord Treasurer. But the sons of Hyde were as staunch to the old Cavalier doctrines of Church and State as Hyde himself. Rochester therefore was told in the opening of 1687 that the King could not safely entrust so great a charge to any one who did not share his sentiments on religion, and on his refusal to abandon his faith he was deprived of the White Staff. His brother Clarendon shared his fall. A Catholic, Lord Bellasys, became First Lord of the Treasury, which was again put into commission after Rochester's removal; and another Catholic, Lord Arundel, became Lord Privy Seal; while Father Petre, a Jesuit, was called to the Privy Council.

*The Tory
Nobles.* The dismissal of Rochester sprang mainly from a belief that with such a minister James would fail to procure from the Parliament that freedom for Catholics which

he was bent on establishing. It was in fact a declaration that on this matter none in the King's service must oppose the King's will, and it was followed up by the dismissal of one official after another who refused to aid in the repeal of the Test Act. But acts like these were of no avail against the steady growth of resistance. If the great Tory nobles were staunch for the Crown, they were as resolute Englishmen in their hatred of mere tyranny as the Whigs themselves. James gave the Duke of Norfolk the sword of State to carry before him as he went to Mass. The Duke stopped at the Chapel door. "Your father would have gone further," said the King. "Your Majesty's father was the better man," replied the Duke, "and he would not have gone so far." The young Duke of Somerset was ordered to introduce into the Presence Chamber the Papal Nuncio, who was now received in State at Windsor in the teeth of a statute which forbade diplomatic relations with Rome. "I am advised," Somerset answered, "that I cannot obey your Majesty without breaking the law." "Do you not know that I am above the law?" James asked angrily. "Your Majesty may be, but I am not," retorted the Duke. He was dismissed from his post, but the spirit of resistance spread fast. In spite of the King's letters the governors of the Charter House, who numbered among them some of the greatest English nobles, refused to admit a Catholic to the benefits of the foundation. The most devoted loyalists began to murmur when James demanded apostasy as a proof of their loyalty.

He had in fact to abandon at last all hope of bringing the Church or the Tories over to his will, and in the spring of 1687 he turned, as Charles had turned, to the Nonconformists. He published in April a Declaration of Indulgence which suspended the operation of the penal laws against Nonconformists and Catholics alike, and of every Act which imposed a test as a qualification for office in Church or State. A hope was expressed that this measure

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would be sanctioned by Parliament when it was suffered to reassemble. The temptation to accept the Indulgence was great, for since the fall of Shaftesbury persecution had fallen heavily on the Protestant dissidents, and we can hardly wonder that the Nonconformists wavered for a time or that numerous addresses of thanks were presented to James. But the great body of them, and all the more venerable names among them, remained true to the cause of freedom. Baxter, Howe, and Bunyan all refused an Indulgence which could only be purchased by the violent overthrow of the law. It was plain that the only mode of actually securing the end which James had in view was to procure a repeal of the Test Act from Parliament itself. It was to this that the King's dismissal of Rochester and other ministerial changes had been directed; but James found that the temper of the existing Houses, so far as he could test it, remained absolutely opposed to his project. In July therefore he dissolved the Parliament, and summoned a new one. In spite of the support he might expect from the Nonconformists in the elections, he knew that no free Parliament could be brought to consent to the repeal. The Lords indeed could be swamped by lavish creations of new peers. "Your troop of horse," Lord Sunderland told Churchill, "shall be called up into the House of Lords." But it was a harder matter to secure a compliant House of Commons. No effort however was spared. The Lord-Lieutenants were directed to bring about such a "regulation" of the governing body in boroughs as would ensure the return of candidates pledged to the repeal of the Test, and to question every magistrate in their county as to his vote. Half of them at once refused to comply, and a string of great nobles—the Earls of Oxford, Shrewsbury, Dorset, Derby, Pembroke, Rutland, Abergavenny, Thanet, Northampton, and Abingdon—were dismissed from their Lord-Lieutenancies. The justices when questioned simply replied that they would vote according to their consciences, and send members to Parliament who would protect the

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Protestant religion. After repeated "regulations" it was found impossible to form a corporate body which would return representatives willing to comply with the royal will. All thought of a Parliament had to be abandoned; and even the most bigoted courtiers counselled moderation at this proof of the stubborn opposition which James must prepare to encounter from the peers, the gentry, and the trading classes.

Estranged as he was from the whole body of the nobles and gentry it remained for James to force the clergy also into an attitude of resistance. Even the tyranny of the Commission had failed to drive into open opposition men who had been preaching Sunday after Sunday the doctrine of passive obedience to the worst of kings. But James who had now finally abandoned all hope of winning the aid of the Church in his project cared little for passive obedience. He looked on the refusal of the clergy to support his plans as freeing him from the pledge he had given to maintain the Church as established by law; and he resolved to attack it in the great institutions which had till now been its strongholds. To secure the Universities for Catholicism was to seize the only training schools which the English clergy possessed as well as the only centres of higher education which existed for the English gentry. It was on such a seizure however that James's mind was set. Little indeed was done with Cambridge. A Benedictine monk, who presented himself with royal letters recommending him for the degree of a Master of Arts, was rejected on his refusal to sign the Articles; and the Vice-Chancellor was summoned before the Privy Council and punished for his rejection by deprivation from office. But a violent and obstinate attack was directed against Oxford. The Master of University College, Obadiah Walker, who declared himself a Catholic convert, was authorized to retain his post in defiance of the law. A Roman Catholic named Massey was presented by the Crown to the Deanery of Christ Church. Magdalen was

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CHAP. III. the wealthiest College in the University; and James in 1687 recommended one Farmer, a Catholic of infamous life and not even qualified by statute for the office, to its vacant headship. The Fellows remonstrated, and on the rejection of their remonstrance chose Hough, one of their own number, as their President. The Ecclesiastical Commission declared the election void; and James, shamed out of his first candidate, recommended a second, Parker, Bishop of Oxford, a Catholic in heart and the meanest of his courtiers. The Fellows however pleaded that Hough was already chosen, and they held stubbornly to their legal head. It was in vain that the King visited Oxford, summoned them to his presence, and rated them as they knelt before him like schoolboys. "I am King," he said; "I will be obeyed! Go to your chapel this instant, and elect the Bishop! Let those who refuse look to it, for they shall feel the whole weight of my hand!" It was seen that to give Magdalen as well as Christ Church into Catholic hands was to turn Oxford into a Catholic seminary, and the King's threats were disregarded. But they were soon carried out. A special Commission visited the University, pronounced Hough an intruder, set aside his appeal to the law, burst open the door of his president's house to install Parker in his place, and on their refusal to submit deprived the Fellows of their fellowships. The expulsion of the Fellows was followed on a like refusal by that of the Demies. Parker, who died immediately after his installation, was succeeded by a Roman Catholic bishop *in partibus*, named Bonaventure Gifford, and twelve Roman Catholics were admitted to fellowships in a single day.

James and William. With peers, gentry, and clergy in dogged opposition the scheme of wresting a repeal of the Test Act from a new Parliament became impracticable, and without this—as James well knew—his system of Indulgence, even if he was able to maintain it so long, must end with his death and the accession of a Protestant sovereign. It was to provide against such a defeat of his designs that he stooped

to ask the aid of William of Orange. Ever since his accession William had followed his father-in-law's courses with a growing anxiety. For while England was seething with the madness of the Popish Plot and of the royalist reaction the great European struggle which occupied the whole mind of the Prince had been drawing nearer and nearer. The patience of Germany indeed was worn out by the ceaseless aggressions of Lewis, and in 1686 its princes had bound themselves at Augsburg to resist all further encroachments on the part of France. From that moment war became inevitable, and in such a war William had always held that the aid of England was essential to success. But his efforts to ensure English aid had utterly failed. James, as William soon came to know, had renewed his brother's secret treaty with France; and even had this been otherwise his quarrel with his people would of itself have prevented him from giving any aid in a struggle abroad. The Prince could only silently look on with a desperate hope that James might yet be brought to a nobler policy. He refused all encouragement to the leading malcontents who were already calling on him to interfere in arms. On the other hand he declined to support the King in his schemes for the abolition of the Test. If he still cherished hopes of bringing about a peace between the King and people which might enable him to enlist England in the Grand Alliance, they vanished in 1687 before the Declaration of Indulgence. It was at this moment, at the end of May, that James called on him and Mary to declare themselves in favour of the abolition of the penal laws and of the Test. "Conscience, honour, and good policy," wrote James, "bind me to procure safety for the Catholics. I cannot leave those who have remained faithful to the old and true religion subject to the oppression under which the laws place them."

But simultaneously with the King's appeal letters of great import reached the Prince from the leading nobles. Some, like the Hydes, simply assured him of their friendship.

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CHAP. III. The Bishop of London added assurances of support. Others, like Devonshire, Nottingham, and Shrewsbury, cautiously or openly warned the Prince against compliance with the King's demand. Lord Churchill announced the resolve of Mary's sister Anne to stand in any case by the cause of Protestantism. Danby, the leading representative of the great Tory party, told the Dutch ambassador plainly to warn William that if James was suffered to pursue his present course, and above all to gain control over the Parliament, he would leave the Catholic party strong enough at his death to threaten Mary's succession. The letters dictated William's answer. No one, he truly protested, loathed religious persecution more than he himself did, but in relaxing political disabilities James called on him to countenance an attack on his own religion. "I cannot," he ended, "concur in what your Majesty desires of me." William's refusal was justified, as we have seen, by the result of the efforts to assemble a Parliament favourable to the repeal of the Test. The wholesale dismissal of justices and Lord-Lieutenants through the summer of 1687 failed to shake the resolve of the counties. The "regulation" of their corporations by the displacing of their older members and the substitution of Nonconformists did little to gain the towns. The year 1688 indeed had hardly opened when it was found necessary to adjourn the elections which had been fixed for February, and to make a fresh attempt to win a warmer support from the residents and from the country. For James clung with a desperate tenacity to the hope of finding a compliant Parliament. He knew, what was as yet unknown to the world, the fact that his Queen was with child. The birth of an heir would meet the danger which he looked for from the succession of William and Mary. But James was past middle life, and his death would leave his boy at the mercy of a Regency which could hardly fail to be composed of men who would undo the King's work and even bring up the young sovereign as a Protestant. His own security, as he thought,

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against such a course lay in the building up a strong Catholic party, in placing Catholics in the high offices of State, and in providing against their expulsion from these at his death by a repeal of the Test. But such a repeal could only be won from Parliament, and hopeless as the effort seemed James pressed doggedly on in his attempt to secure Houses who would carry out his will.

The renewed Declaration of Indulgence which he issued in April 1688 was not only intended to win the Nonconformists by fresh assurances of the King's sincerity, it was an appeal to the nation at large. At its close he promised to summon a Parliament in November, and he called on the electors to choose such members as would bring to a successful end the policy he had begun. His resolve, he said, was to make merit the one qualification for office and to establish universal liberty of conscience for all future time. It was in this character of a royal appeal that he ordered every clergyman to read the Declaration during divine service on two successive Sundays. Little time was given for deliberation; but little time was needed. The clergy refused almost to a man to be the instruments of their own humiliation. The Declaration was read in only four of the London Churches, and in these the congregation flocked out of church at the first words of it. Nearly all the country parsons refused to obey the royal orders, and the Bishops went with the rest of the clergy. A few days before the appointed Sunday Archbishop Sancroft called his suffragans together, and the six who were able to appear at Lambeth signed a temperate protest to the King in which they declined to publish an illegal Declaration. "It is a standard of rebellion," James exclaimed, as the Primate presented the paper; and the resistance of the clergy was no sooner announced to him than he determined to wreak his vengeance on the prelates who had signed the protest. He ordered the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to deprive them of their sees; but in this matter even the Commissioners shrank from obeying him. The Chancellor,

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CHAP. III. Lord Jeffreys, advised a prosecution for libel as an easier mode of punishment; and the Bishops, who refused to give bail, were committed on this charge to the Tower. They passed to their prison amidst the shouts of a great multitude; the sentinels knelt for their blessing as they entered its gates, and the soldiers of the garrison drank their healths. So threatening was the temper of the nation that his ministers pressed James to give way. But his obstinacy grew with the danger. "Indulgence," he said, "ruined my father;" and on the 29th of June the Bishops appeared as criminals at the bar of the King's Bench. The jury had been packed, the judges were mere tools of the Crown, but judges and jury were alike overawed by the indignation of the people at large. No sooner had the foreman of the jury uttered the words "Not guilty" than a roar of applause burst from the crowd, and horsemen spurred along every road to carry over the country the news of the acquittal.

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James was at Hounslow when the news of the verdict reached him, and as he rode from the camp he heard a great shout behind him. "What is that?" he asked. "It is nothing," was the reply; "only the soldiers are glad that the Bishops are acquitted!" "Do you call that nothing?" grumbled the King. The shout told him that he stood utterly alone in his realm. The peerage, the gentry, the bishops, the clergy, the universities, every lawyer, every trader, every farmer, stood aloof from him. And now his very soldiers forsook him. The most devoted Catholics pressed him to give way. But to give way was to reverse every act he had done since his accession and to change the whole nature of his government. All show of legal rule had disappeared. Sheriffs, mayors, magistrates, appointed by the Crown in defiance of a parliamentary statute, were no real officers in the eye of the law. Even if the Houses were summoned members returned by officers such as these could form no legal Parliament. Hardly a Minister of the Crown or a Privy Councillor exercised any lawful

authority. James had brought things to such a pass that the restoration of legal government meant the absolute reversal of every act he had done. But he was in no mood to reverse his acts. His temper was only spurred to a more dogged obstinacy by danger and remonstrance. "I will lose all," he said to the Spanish ambassador who counselled moderation; "I will lose all or win all." He broke up the camp at Hounslow and dispersed its troops in distant cantonments. He dismissed the two judges who had favoured the acquittal of the Bishops. He ordered the chancellor of each diocese to report the names of the clergy who had not read the Declaration of Indulgence. But his will broke fruitlessly against a sullen resistance which met him on every side. Not a chancellor made a return to the Commissioners, and the Commissioners were cowed into inaction by the temper of the nation. When the judges who had displayed their servility to the Crown went on circuit the gentry refused to meet them. A yet fiercer irritation was kindled by the King's resolve to supply the place of the English troops whose temper proved unserviceable for his purposes by draughts from the Catholic army which Tyrconnell had raised in Ireland. Even the Roman Catholic peers at the Council table protested against this measure; and six officers in a single regiment laid down their commissions rather than enrol the Irish recruits among their men. The ballad of "Lillibullero," a scurrilous attack on the Irish recruits, was sung from one end of England to the other.

Wide however as the disaffection undoubtedly was the position of James seemed fairly secure. He counted on the aid of France. His army, whatever signs of discontent it might show, was still a formidable force of twenty thousand men. Scotland, disheartened by the failure of Argyll's rising, could give no such help as it gave to the Long Parliament. Ireland on the other hand was ready to throw a Catholic army in the King's sup-

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 The Fall of the Stuarts. England itself disaffection would turn into actual revolt.
 1683-1714. The Bloody Assize had left its terror on the Whigs. The
 Tories and Churchmen, angered as they were, were still
 hampered by their horror of rebellion and their doctrine of
 non-resistance. Above all the eyes of the nation rested on
 William and Mary. James was past middle age, and a few
 years must bring a Protestant successor and restore the
 reign of law. But in the midst of the struggle with the
 Church it was announced that the Queen was again with
 child. The news was received with general unbelief, for
 five years had passed since the last pregnancy of Mary of
 Modena, and the unbelief passed into a general expecta-
 tion of some imposture as men watched the joy of the
 Catholics and their confident prophecies that the child
 would be a boy. But, truth or imposture, it was plain
 that the appearance of a Prince of Wales must bring
 on a crisis. If the child turned out a boy, and as was
 certain was brought up a Catholic, the highest Tory had
 to resolve at last whether the tyranny under which
 England lay should go on for ever. The hesitation of the
 country was at an end. Danby, loyal above all to the
 Church and firm in his hatred of subservience to France,
 answered for the Tories. Compton answered for the High
 Churchmen, goaded at last into rebellion by the Declara-
 tion of Indulgence. The Earl of Devonshire, the Lord
 Cavendish of the Exclusion struggle, answered for the
 Nonconformists, who were satisfied with William's promise
 to procure them toleration, as well as for the general body
 of the Whigs. The announcement of the boy's birth on the
 20th of June was followed ten days after by a formal
 invitation to William to intervene in arms for the restora-
 tion of English liberty and the protection of the Protestant
 religion. The invitation was signed by Danby, Devonshire,
 and Compton, the representatives of the great parties
 whose long fight was hushed at last by a common danger,
 by two recent converts from the Catholic faith, the Earl of

Shrewsbury and Lord Lumley, by Edward the cousin of Lord Russell, and by Henry the brother of Algernon Sydney. It was carried to the Hague by Herbert, the most popular of English seamen, who had been deprived of his command for a refusal to vote against the Test.

The Invitation called on the Prince of Orange to land with an army strong enough to justify those who signed it in rising in arms. An outbreak of revolt was in fact inevitable, and either its success or defeat must be equally fatal to William should he refuse to put himself at its head. If the rebels were victorious, their resentment at his desertion of their cause in the hour of need would make Mary's succession impossible and probably bring about the establishment of a Commonwealth. On the other hand the victory of the King would not only ruin English freedom and English Protestantism, but fling the whole weight of England in the contest for the liberties of Europe which was now about to open into the scale of France. From the opening of 1688 the signs of a mutual understanding between the English Court and the French had been unmistakeable. James had declared himself on the side of Lewis in the negotiations with the Empire which followed on the Treaty of Augsburg. He had backed Sweden in its threats of war against the Dutch. At the instigation of France he had recalled the English and Scotch troops in the service of the State. He had received supplies from Lewis to send an English fleet to the coast of Holland; and was at this moment supporting at Rome the French side in the quarrel over the Electorate of Cologne, a quarrel which rendered war inevitable. It was certain therefore that success at home would secure James's aid to France in the struggle abroad.

It was this above all which decided the action of the Prince, for the ruling passion in William's heart was the longing to free Europe from the supremacy of France. It was this too which made his enterprise possible, for nothing but a sense of their own danger would have forced his

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William's
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 ance.

CHAP. III. opponents in Holland itself to assent to his expedition. Their assent however once gained, William strained all his resources as Admiral and Captain-General to gather a fleet and a sufficient force under pretext of defence against the English fleet which now appeared in the Channel, while Brandenburg promised to supply the place of the Dutch forces during their absence in England by lending the States nine thousand men. As soon as the news of these preparations reached England noble after noble made their way to the Hague. The Earl of Shrewsbury brought £2,000 towards the expenses of the Expedition. Edward Russell, the representative of the Whig Earl of Bedford, was followed by the representatives of great Tory houses, by the sons of the Marquis of Winchester, of Lord Danby, of Lord Peterborough, and by Lord Macclesfield, a well-known High Churchman. At home the Earls of Danby and Devonshire prepared silently with Lord Lumley for a rising in the North. In spite of the profound secrecy with which all was conducted, the keen instinct of Sunderland, who had stooped to purchase continuance in office at the price of a secret apostasy to Catholicism, detected the preparations of William; and the sense that his master's ruin was at hand encouraged him to tell every secret of James on the promise of a pardon for the crimes to which he had lent himself. James alone remained stubborn and insensate as of old. He had no fear of a revolt unaided by the Prince of Orange, and he believed that the threat of a French attack on Holland itself would render William's departure impossible. At the opening of September indeed Lewis declared himself aware of the meaning of the Dutch armaments and warned the States that he should look on an attack upon James as a war upon himself.

*James
gives way.*

Fortunately for William so open an announcement of the union between England and France suited ill with the plans of James. He still looked forward to the coming Parliament, and the knowledge of a league with France was certain to make any Parliament reluctant to admit

Catholics to a share in political life. James therefore roughly disavowed the act of Lewis, and William was able to continue his preparations. But even had no such disavowal come the threat of Lewis would have remained an empty one. In spite of the counsel of Louvois he looked on an invasion of Holland as likely to serve English interests rather than French and resolved to open the war by a campaign on the Rhine. In September his troops marched eastward, and the Dutch at once felt themselves secure. The States-General gave their public sanction to William's project, and the armament he had prepared gathered rapidly in the Scheldt. The news of war and of the diversion of the French forces to Germany no sooner reached England than the King passed from obstinacy to panic. By draughts from Scotland and Ireland he had mustered forty thousand men, but the temper of the troops robbed him of all trust in them. Help from France was now out of the question. There was nothing for it but to fall back, as Sunderland had for some time been advising him to fall back, on the older policy of a union with the Tory party and the party of the Church; and to win assent for his plans from the coming Parliament by an abandonment of his recent acts. But the haste and completeness with which James reversed his whole course forbade any belief in his sincerity. He personally appealed for support to the Bishops. He dissolved the Ecclesiastical Commission. He replaced the magistrates he had driven from office. He restored their franchises to the towns. The Chancellor carried back the Charter of London in state into the City. The Bishop of Winchester was sent to replace the expelled Fellows of Magdalen. Catholic chapels and Jesuit schools were ordered to be closed.

Sunderland pressed for the instant calling of a Parliament. But it was still plain that any Parliament would as yet be eager for war with France and would probably call on the King to put the Prince of Orange at the

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CHAP. III. head of his army in such a war. To James therefore
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The landing seemed at first a failure. The country

remained quiet. William's coming had been unexpected in the West, and no great landowner joined his forces. Though the King's fleet had failed to intercept the expedition it closed in from the Channel to prevent William's escape as soon as he had landed, while the King's army moved rapidly to encounter him in the field. But the pause was one of momentary surprise. Before a week had passed the nobles and squires of the west flocked to William's camp and the adhesion of Plymouth secured his rear. The call of the King's forces to face the Prince in the south no sooner freed the northern parts of England from their presence than the insurrection broke out. Scotland threw off the royal rule. Danby, dashing at the head of a hundred horsemen into York, gave the signal for a rising. The York militia met his appeal with shouts of "A free Parliament and the Protestant religion;" peers and gentry flocked to his standard; and a march on Nottingham united his forces to those under Devonshire who had mustered at Derby the great lords of the midland and eastern counties. Everywhere the revolt was triumphant. The garrison of Hull declared for a free Parliament. The Duke of Norfolk appeared at the head of three hundred gentlemen in the marketplace at Norwich. At Oxford townsmen and gowmsmen greeted Lord Lovelace and the forces he led with uproarious welcome. Bristol threw open its gates to the Prince of Orange, who advanced steadily on Salisbury where James had assembled his forces.

But the King's army, broken by dissensions and mutual suspicions among its leaders, shrank from an engagement and fell back in disorder at his approach. Its retreat was the signal for a general abandonment of the royal cause. The desertion of Lord Churchill, who had from the first made his support conditional on the calling of a Parliament, a step which the King still hesitated to take, was followed by that of so many other officers that James abandoned the struggle in despair. He fled to London

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CHAP. III. to hear that his daughter Anne had left St. James's to join Danby at Nottingham. "God help me," cried the wretched father, "for my own children have forsaken me!" His spirit was utterly broken by the sudden crash; and though he had promised to call the Houses together and despatched commissioners to Hungerford to treat with William on the terms of a free Parliament, in his heart he had resolved on flight. Parliament, he said to the few who still clung to him, would force on him concessions he could not endure; while flight would enable him to return and regain his throne with the assistance of French forces. He only waited therefore for news of the escape of his wife and child on the 10th of December to make his way to the Isle of Sheppey, where a hoy lay ready to carry him to France. Some rough fishermen however who took him for a Jesuit prevented his escape, and a troop of Life Guards brought him back in safety to London. His return revived the hopes of the Tories, who with Clarendon and Rochester at their head looked on the work of the Prince of Orange as done in the overthrow of the King's design of establishing a Catholic despotism, and who trusted that their system would be restored by a reconciliation of James with the Tory Parliament they expected to be returned. Halifax however, though he had long acted with the Tories, was too clear-sighted for hopes such as these. He had taken no part in the invitation or revolt, but now that the revolution was successful he pressed upon William the impossibility of carrying out a new system of government with such a sovereign as James. The Whigs, who had gone beyond hope of forgiveness, backed powerfully these arguments; and in spite of the pledges with which he had landed the Prince was soon as convinced of their wisdom as the Whigs. From this moment it was the policy of William and his advisers to further a flight which removed their chief difficulty out of the way. It would have been hard to depose James had he remained,

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and perilous to keep him prisoner; but the entry of the Dutch troops into London, the silence of the Prince, and an order to leave St. James's filled the King with fresh terrors, and taking advantage of the means of escape which were almost openly placed at his disposal James a second time quitted London and embarked on the 23rd of December unhindered for France.

Before flying James had burnt most of the writs convoking a new Parliament, had disbanded his army, and destroyed so far as he could all means of government. For a few days there was a wild burst of panic and outrage in London, but the orderly instinct of the people soon reasserted itself. The Lords who were at the moment in the capital provided on their own authority as Privy Councillors for the more pressing needs of administration, and quietly resigned their authority into William's hands on his arrival. The difficulty which arose from the absence of any person legally authorized to call Parliament together was got over by convoking the House of Peers, and forming a second body of all members who had sat in the Commons in the reign of Charles the Second together with the Aldermen and Common Councillors of London. Both bodies requested William to take on himself the provisional government of the kingdom, and to issue circular letters inviting the electors of every town and county to send up representatives to a Convention which met on the 22nd of January, 1689. In the new Convention both Houses were found equally resolved against any recall of or negotiation with the fallen King. They were united in entrusting a provisional authority to the Prince of Orange. But with this step their unanimity ended. The Whigs, who formed a majority in the Commons, voted a resolution which, illogical and inconsistent as it seemed, was well adapted to unite in its favour every element of the opposition to James, the Churchman who was simply scared by his bigotry, the Tory who doubted the right of a nation to depose its King, the

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Whig who held the theory of a contract between King and People. They voted that King James, "having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of this kingdom by breaking the original contract between King and People, and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, has abdicated the Government, and that the throne is thereby vacant." But in the Lords where the Tories were still in the ascendant the resolution was fiercely debated. Archbishop Sancroft with the high Tories held that no crime could bring about a forfeiture of the crown and that James still remained King, but that his tyranny had given the nation a right to withdraw from him the actual exercise of government and to entrust his functions to a Regency. The moderate Tories under Danby's guidance admitted that James had ceased to be King but denied that the throne could be vacant, and contended that from the moment of his abdication the sovereignty vested in his daughter Mary. It was in vain that the eloquence of Halifax backed the Whig peers in struggling for the resolution of the Commons as it stood. The plan of a Regency was lost by a single vote, and Danby's scheme was adopted by a large majority.

*Declara-
tion of
Rights.*

But both the Tory courses found a sudden obstacle in William. He declined to be Regent. He had no mind, he said to Danby, to be his wife's gentleman-usher. Mary on the other hand refused to accept the crown save in conjunction with her husband. The two declarations put an end to the question, and it was settled that William and Mary should be acknowledged as joint sovereigns but that the actual administration should rest with William alone. It had been agreed throughout however that before the throne was filled up the constitutional liberties of the subject must be secured. A Parliamentary Committee in which the most active member was John Somers, a young lawyer who had distinguished himself in the trial of the Bishops and who was destined to play a great part in later

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history, drew up a Declaration of Rights which after some alterations was adopted by the two Houses. The Declaration recited the misgovernment of James, his abdication, and the resolve of the Lords and Commons to assert the ancient rights and liberties of English subjects. It condemned as illegal his establishment of an ecclesiastical commission, and his raising of an army without Parliamentary sanction. It denied the right of any king to suspend or dispense with laws, as they had been suspended or dispensed with of late, or to exact money save by consent of Parliament. It asserted for the subject a right to petition, to a free choice of representatives in Parliament, and to a pure and merciful administration of justice. It declared the right of both Houses to liberty of debate. It demanded securities for the free exercise of their religion by all Protestants, and bound the new sovereign to maintain the Protestant religion as well as the laws and liberties of the nation. "We do claim and insist on the premises," ran the Declaration, "as our undoubted rights and liberties; encouraged by the Declaration of his Highness the Prince, we have confidence that he will perfect the deliverance he has begun and will preserve our rights against all further injury." It ended by declaring the Prince and Princess of Orange King and Queen of England. The Declaration was presented to William and Mary on the 13th of February by the two Houses in the Banqueting Room at Whitehall, and at the close of its recital Halifax, in the name of the Estates of the Realm, prayed them to receive the crown. William accepted the offer in his own name and in that of his wife and declared in a few words the resolve of both to maintain the laws and to govern by advice of Parliament.

But William's eyes were fixed less on England than on Europe. His expedition had had in his own eyes a European rather than an English aim, and in his acceptance of the crown he had been moved not so much by personal ambition as by the prospect which offered itself of firmly knitting together England and Holland.

*Lewis and
the Revo-
lution.*

CHAP. III. the two great Protestant powers whose fleets held the mastery of the sea. But the advance from such a union to the formation of the European alliance against France on which he was bent was a step that still had to be made. Already indeed his action in England had told decisively on the contest. The blunder of Lewis in choosing Germany instead of Holland for his point of attack had been all but atoned for by the brilliant successes with which he opened the war. The whole country west of the Rhine fell at once into his hands; his armies made themselves masters of the Palatinate, and penetrated even to Würtemberg. The hopes of the French King indeed had never been higher than at the moment when the arrival of James at St. Germain dashed all hope to the ground. Lewis was at once thrown back on a war of defence, and the brutal ravages which marked the retreat of his armies from the Rhine revealed the bitterness with which his pride stooped to the necessity.

*The
Grand
Alliance.*

But his reception of James at St. Germain as still King of England gave fresh force to William's efforts. It was yet doubtful whether William would be able to bring England to a hearty cooperation in the struggle against French ambition. But whatever reluctance there might have been to follow him in an attack on France with the view of saving the liberties of Europe the stoutest Tory had none in following him in such an attack when it meant simply self-defence against a French restoration of the Stuart King at the cost of English freedom. It was with universal approval that the English Government declared war against Lewis. It was soon followed in this step by Holland, and the two countries at once agreed to stand by one another in their struggle against France. But it was more difficult to secure the cooperation of the two branches of the House of Austria in Germany and Spain, reluctant as they were to join the Protestant powers in league against a Catholic King. Spain however was forced by Lewis into war, for he aimed at the Netherlands as his especial prey;

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and the court of Vienna at last yielded to the bait held out by Holland of a recognition of its claims to the Spanish succession.

The adhesion of these powers in the spring of 1689 completed the Grand Alliance of the European powers which William had designed; and the union of Savoy with the allies girt France in on every side save that of Switzerland with a ring of foes. Lewis was left without a single ally save the Turk; for though the Scandinavian kingdoms stood aloof from the confederacy of Europe their neutrality was unfriendly to him. But the energy and quickness of movement which sprang from the concentration of the power of France in a single hand still left the contest an equal one. The Empire was slow to move; the court of Vienna was distracted with a war against the Turks; Spain was all but powerless; Holland and England were alone earnest in the struggle, and England could as yet give little aid in it. One English brigade indeed, formed from the regiments raised by James, joined the Dutch army on the Sambre, and distinguished itself under Churchill, who had been rewarded for his treason by the title of Earl of Marlborough, in a brisk skirmish with the enemy at Walcourt. But for the bulk of his forces William had as yet grave work to do at home. In England not a sword had been drawn for James. In Scotland his tyranny had been yet greater than in England, and so far as the Lowlands went the fall of his tyranny was as rapid and complete. No sooner had he called his troops southward to meet William's invasion than Edinburgh rose in revolt. The western peasants were at once up in arms; and the Episcopalian clergy, who had been the instruments of the Stuart misgovernment ever since the Restoration, were rabbled and driven from their parsonages in every parish. The news of these disorders forced William to act, though he was without a show of legal authority over Scotland. On the advice of the Scotch Lords present in London he ventured to summon a Convention similar to that which had been summoned in

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CHAP. III. England, and on his own responsibility to set aside the laws passed by the "Drunken Parliament" of the Restoration which excluded Presbyterians from the Scotch Parliament. This Convention resolved that James had forfeited the crown by misgovernment, and offered it to William and Mary. The offer was accompanied by a Claim of Right framed on the model of the Declaration of Rights to which the two sovereigns had consented in England, but closing with a demand for the abolition of Prelacy. Both crown and claim were accepted, and the arrival of the Scotch regiments which William had brought from Holland gave strength to the new Government.

Killiecrankie. Its strength was to be roughly tested. On the revolt of the capital John Graham of Claverhouse, whose cruelties in the persecution of the Western Covenanters had been rewarded by high command in the Scotch army and by the title of Viscount Dundee, withdrew with a few troopers from Edinburgh to the Highlands and appealed to the clans. In the Highlands nothing was known of English government or misgovernment: all that the Revolution meant to a Highlander was the restoration of the House of Argyle. To many of the clans it meant the restoration of lands which had been granted them on the Earl's attainder; and the zeal of the Macdonalds, the Macleans, the Camerons, who were as ready to join Dundee in fighting the Campbells and the Government which upheld them as they had been ready to join Montrose in the same cause forty years before, was quickened by a reluctance to disgorge their spoil. They were soon in arms. William's Scotch regiments under General Mackay were sent to suppress the rising; but as they climbed the pass of Killiecrankie on the 27th of July 1689 Dundee charged them at the head of three thousand clansmen and swept them in headlong rout down the glen. His death in the moment of victory broke however the only bond which held the Highlanders together, and in a few weeks the host which had spread terror through the Lowlands

melted helplessly away. In the next summer Mackay was able to build the strong post of Fort William in the very heart of the disaffected country, and his offers of money and pardon brought about the submission of the clans.

The work of peace was sullied by an act of cruel treachery the memory of which still lingers in the minds of men. Sir John Dalrymple, the Master of Stair, in whose hands the government of Scotland at this time mainly rested, had hoped that a refusal of the oath of allegiance would give grounds for a war of extermination and free Scotland forever from its dread of the Highlanders. He had provided for the expected refusal by orders of a ruthless severity. "Your troops," he wrote to the officer in command, "will destroy entirely the country of Lochaber, Locheil's lands, Keppoch's, Glengarry's, and Glencoe's. Your powers shall be large enough. I hope the soldiers will not trouble the Government with prisoners." But his hopes were disappointed by the readiness with which the clans accepted the offers of the Government. All submitted in good time save Macdonald of Glencoe, whose pride delayed his taking of the oath till six days after the latest date fixed by the proclamation. Foiled in his larger hopes of destruction Dalrymple seized eagerly on the pretext given by Macdonald, and an order "for the extirpation of that sect of robbers" was laid before William and received the royal signature. "The work," wrote the Master of Stair to Colonel Hamilton who undertook it, "must be secret and sudden." The troops were chosen from among the Campbells, the deadly foes of the clansmen of Glencoe, and quartered peacefully among the Macdonalds for twelve days till all suspicion of their errand disappeared. At daybreak on the 13th of February 1692 they fell on their hosts, and in a few moments thirty of the clansfolk lay dead on the snow. The rest, sheltered by a storm, escaped to the mountains to perish for the most part of cold and hunger. "The only thing I regret," said the

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Massacre
of
Glencoe.

CHAP. III. Master of Stair, when the news reached him, "is that any got away."

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But whatever horror the Massacre of Glencoe has roused in later days few save Dalrymple knew of it at the time. The peace of the Highlands enabled the work of reorganization to go on quietly at Edinburgh. In accepting the Claim of Right with its repudiation of Prelacy William had in effect restored the Presbyterian Church to which nine-tenths of the Lowland Scotchmen clung, and its restoration was accompanied by the revival of the Westminster Confession as a standard of faith and by the passing of an Act which abolished lay patronage. Against the Toleration Act which the King proposed the Scotch Parliament stood firm. But though the measure failed the King was as firm in his purpose as the Parliament. So long as he reigned, William declared in memorable words, there should be no persecution for conscience sake. "We never could be of that mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion, nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party."

*The
Irish
Rising.*

It was not in Scotland however but in Ireland that James and Lewis hoped to arrest William's progress. Ireland had long been the object of special attention on the part of James. In the middle of his reign, when his chief aim was to provide against the renewed depression of his fellow religionists at his death by any Protestant successor, he had resolved (if we may trust the statement of the French ambassador) to place Ireland in such a position of independence that she might serve as a refuge for his Catholic subjects. It was with a view to the success of this design that Lord Clarendon was dismissed from the Lord-Lieutenancy and succeeded in the charge of the island by the Catholic Earl of Tyrconnell. The new governor, who was raised to a dukedom, went roughly to work. Every Englishman was turned out of office. Every Judge, every Privy Councillor, every Mayor and Alderman of a

borough, was required to be a Catholic and an Irishman. CHAP. III. The Irish army, raised to the number of fifty thousand men and purged of its Protestant soldiers, was entrusted to Catholic officers. In a few months the English ascendancy was overthrown, and the life and fortune of the English settlers were at the mercy of the natives on whom they had trampled since Cromwell's day. The King's flight and the agitation among the native Irish at the news spread panic therefore through the island. Another massacre was believed to be at hand; and fifteen hundred Protestant families, chiefly from the south, fled in terror over sea. The Protestants of the north on the other hand drew together at Enniskillen and Londonderry, and prepared for self-defence. The outbreak however was still delayed, and for two months Tyrconnell intrigued with William's Government. But his aim was simply to gain time. He was at this very moment indeed inviting James to return to Ireland, and assuring him of his fidelity. To James this call promised the aid of an army which would enable him to help the Scotch rising and to effect a landing in England, while Lewis saw in it the means of diverting William from giving effectual aid to the Grand Alliance. A staff of French officers with arms, ammunition, and a supply of money was placed therefore at the service of the exiled King, and the news of his coming no sooner reached Dublin at the opening of 1689 than Tyrconnell threw off the mask. A flag was hoisted over Dublin Castle with the words embroidered on its folds "Now or Never." The signal called every Catholic to arms. The maddened Irishmen flung themselves on the plunder which their masters had left and in a few weeks havoc was done, the French envoy told Lewis, which it would take years to repair.

It was in this condition that James found Ireland when he landed at Kinsale. The rising of the natives had already baffled his plans. To him as to Lewis Ireland was simply a basis of operations against William, and whatever were their hopes of a future restoration of the soil to its older pos-

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sessors both kings were equally anxious that no strife of races should at this moment interrupt their plans of an invasion of England with the fifty thousand soldiers that Tyrconnell was said to have at his disposal. But long ere James landed the war of races had already begun. To Tyrconnell indeed and the Irish leaders the King's plans were utterly distasteful. They had no wish for an invasion and conquest of England which would replace Ireland again in its position of dependence. Their policy was simply that of Ireland for the Irish, and the first step in such a policy was to drive out the Englishmen who still stood at bay in Ulster. Half of Tyrconnell's army therefore had already been sent against Londonderry, where the bulk of the fugitives found shelter behind a weak wall, manned by a few old guns and destitute even of a ditch. But the seven thousand desperate Englishmen behind the wall made up for its weakness. They rejected with firmness the offers of James, who was still anxious to free his hands from a strife which broke his plans. They kept up their fire even when the neighbouring Protestants with their women and children were brutally driven under their walls and placed in the way of their guns. So fierce were their sallies, so crushing the repulse of his attack that the King's general, Hamilton, at last turned the siege into a blockade. The Protestants died of hunger in the streets and of the fever which comes of hunger, but the cry of the town was still "No Surrender." The siege had lasted a hundred and five days and only two days' food remained in Londonderry when on the 28th of July an English ship broke the boom across the river, and the besiegers sullenly withdrew.

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Their defeat was turned into a rout by the men of Enniskillen who struggled through a bog to charge an Irish force of double their number at Newtown Butler, and drove horse and foot before them in a panic which soon spread through Hamilton's whole army. The routed soldiers fell back on Dublin where James lay helpless in the hands of the frenzied Parliament which he had summoned. Every

member returned was an Irishman and a Catholic, and their one aim was to undo the successive confiscations which had given the soil to English settlers and to get back Ireland for the Irish. The Act of Settlement on which all title to property rested was at once repealed in spite of the King's reluctance. He was told indeed bluntly that if he did not do Ireland justice not an Irishman would fight for him. It was to strengthen this work by ensuring the legal forfeiture of their lands that three thousand Protestants of name and fortune were massed together in the hugest Bill of Attainder which the world has seen. To the bitter memory of past wrongs was added the fury of religious bigotry. In spite of the King's promise of religious freedom the Protestant clergy were everywhere driven from their parsonages, Fellows and scholars were turned out of Trinity College, and the French envoy, the Count of Avaux, dared even to propose that if any Protestant rising took place on the English descent, as was expected, it should be met by a general massacre of the Protestants who still lingered in the districts which had submitted to James. To his credit the King shrank horror-struck from the proposal. "I cannot be so cruel," he said, "as to cut their throats while they live peaceably under my government." "Mercy to Protestants," was the cold reply, "is cruelty to Catholics."

The long agony of Londonderry was invaluable to England: it foiled the King's hopes of an invasion which would have roused a fresh civil war, and gave the new Government time to breathe. Time was indeed sorely needed. Through the proscription and bloodshed of the new Irish rule William was forced to look helplessly on. The best troops in the army which had been mustered at Hounslow had been sent with Marlborough to the Sambre, and the political embarrassments which grew up around the new Government made it impossible to spare a man of those who remained at home. The great ends of the Revolution were indeed secured, even amidst the confusion

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CHAP. III. and intrigue which we shall have to describe, by the common consent of all. On the great questions of civil liberty Whig and Tory were now at one. The Declaration of Rights was turned into the Bill of Rights by the Convention which had now become a Parliament, and the passing of this measure in 1689 restored to the monarchy the character which it had lost under the Tudors and the Stuarts. The right of the people through its representatives to depose the King, to change the order of succession, and to set on the throne whom they would, was now established. All claim of Divine Right or hereditary right independent of the law was formally put an end to by the election of William and Mary. Since their day no English sovereign has been able to advance any claim to the crown save a claim which rested on a particular clause in a particular Act of Parliament. William, Mary, and Anne, were sovereigns simply by virtue of the Bill of Rights. George the First and his successors have been sovereigns solely by virtue of the Act of Settlement. An English monarch is now as much the creature of an Act of Parliament as the pettiest tax-gatherer in his realm.

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and the
Army*

Nor was the older character of the kingship alone restored. The older constitution returned with it. Bitter experience had taught England the need of restoring to the Parliament its absolute power over taxation. The grant of revenue for life to the last two kings had been the secret of their anti-national policy, and the first act of the new legislature was to restrict the grant of the royal revenue to a term of four years. William was bitterly galled by the provision. "The gentlemen of England trusted King James," he said, "who was an enemy of their religion and their laws, and they will not trust me, by whom their religion and their laws have been preserved." But the only change brought about in the Parliament by this burst of royal anger was a resolve henceforth to make the vote of supplies an annual one, a resolve which, in spite of the

slight changes introduced by the next Tory Parliament, soon became an invariable rule. A change of almost as great importance established the control of Parliament over the army. The hatred to a standing army which had begun under Cromwell had only deepened under James; but with the continental war the existence of an army was a necessity. As yet however it was a force which had no legal existence. The soldier was simply an ordinary subject; there were no legal means of punishing strictly military offences or of providing for military discipline: and the assumed power of billeting soldiers in private houses had been taken away by the law. The difficulty both of Parliament and the army was met by a Mutiny Act. The powers requisite for discipline in the army were conferred by Parliament on its officers, and provision was made for the pay of the force, but both pay and disciplinary powers were granted only for a single year.

The Mutiny Act, like the grant of supplies, has remained annual ever since the Revolution; and as it is impossible for the State to exist without supplies or for the army to exist without discipline and pay the annual assembly of Parliament has become a matter of absolute necessity. The greatest constitutional change which our history has witnessed was thus brought about in an indirect but perfectly efficient way. The dangers which experience had lately shown lay in the Parliament itself were met with far less skill. Under Charles the Second England had seen a Parliament, which had been returned in a moment of reaction, maintained without fresh election for eighteen years. A Triennial Bill which limited the duration of a Parliament to three was passed with little opposition, but fell before the dislike and veto of William. To counteract the influence which a king might obtain by crowding the Commons with officials proved a yet harder task. A Place Bill which excluded all persons in the employment of the State from a seat in Parliament was defeated, and wisely defeated, in the Lords. The modern course of pro-

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CHAP. III. viding against a pressure from the Court or the administration by excluding all minor officials, but of preserving the hold of Parliament over the great officers of State by admitting them into its body, seems as yet to have occurred to nobody. It is equally strange that while vindicating its right of Parliamentary control over the public revenue and the army the Bill of Rights should have left by its silence the control of trade to the Crown. It was only a few years later, in the discussions on the charter granted to the East India Company, that the Houses silently claimed and obtained the right of regulating English commerce.

The Toleration Act. The religious results of the Revolution were hardly less weighty than the political. In the common struggle against Catholicism Churchman and Nonconformist had found themselves, as we have seen, strangely at one; and schemes of Comprehension became suddenly popular. But with the fall of James the union of the two bodies abruptly ceased; and the establishment of a Presbyterian Church in Scotland, together with the "rabbling" of the Episcopalian clergy in its western shires, revived the old bitterness of the clergy towards the dissidents. The Convocation rejected the scheme of the Latitudinarians for such modifications of the Prayer-book as would render possible a return of the Nonconformists, and a Comprehension Bill which was introduced into Parliament failed to pass in spite of the King's strenuous support. William's attempt to partially admit Dissenters to civil equality by a repeal of the Corporation Act proved equally fruitless. Active persecution however had now become distasteful to all; the pledge of religious liberty given to the Nonconformists to ensure their aid in the Revolution had to be redeemed; and the passing of a Toleration Act in 1689 practically established freedom of worship. Whatever the religious effect of this failure of the Latitudinarian schemes may have been its political effect has been of the highest value. At no time had the Church been so strong or so popular

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as at the Revolution, and the reconciliation of the Nonconformists would have doubled its strength. It is doubtful whether the disinclination to all political change which has characterised it during the last two hundred years would have been affected by such a change; but it is certain that the power of opposition which it has wielded would have been enormously increased. As it was, the Toleration Act established a group of religious bodies whose religious opposition to the Church forced them to support the measures of progress which the Church opposed. With religious forces on the one side and on the other England has escaped the great stumbling-block in the way of nations where the cause of religion has become identified with that of political reaction.

A secession from within its own ranks weakened the Church still more. The doctrine of Divine Right had a strong hold on the body of the clergy though they had been driven from their other favourite doctrine of passive obedience, and the requirement of an oath of allegiance to the new sovereigns from all persons exercising public functions was resented as an intolerable wrong by almost every parson. The whole bench of bishops resolved, though to no purpose, that Parliament had no right to impose such an oath on the clergy. Sancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with a few prelates and a large number of the higher clergy absolutely refused the oath when it was imposed, treated all who took it as schismatics, and on their deprivation by Act of Parliament regarded themselves and their adherents, who were known as Nonjurors, as the only members of the true Church of England. The bulk of the clergy bowed to necessity, but their bitterness against the new Government was fanned into a flame by the religious policy announced in this assertion of the supremacy of Parliament over the Church and the deposition of bishops by an act of the legislature. It was fanned into yet fiercer flame by the choice of successors to the nonjuring prelates. The new bishops were men of learning

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ment.

and piety but they were for the most part Latitudinarians and some of them Whigs. Tillotson, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, was the foremost theologian of the school of Chillingworth and Hales. Burnet, the new bishop of Salisbury, was as liberal as Tillotson in religion and more liberal in politics. It was indeed only among Whigs and Latitudinarians that William and William's successors could find friends in the ranks of the clergy; and it was to these that they were driven with a few breaks here and there to entrust all the higher offices of the Church. The result was a severance between the higher dignitaries and the mass of the clergy which broke the strength of the Church. From the time of William to the time of George the Third its fiercest strife was waged within its own ranks. But the resentment at the measure which brought this strife about already added to the difficulties which William had to encounter.

Yet greater difficulties arose from the temper of his Parliament. In the Commons, chosen as they had been in the first moment of revolutionary enthusiasm, the bulk of the members were Whigs, and their first aim was to redress the wrongs which the Whig party had suffered during the last two reigns. The attainder of Lord Russell was reversed. The judgments against Sidney, Cornish, and Alice Lisle were annulled. In spite of the opinion of the judges that the sentence on Titus Oates had been against law the Lords refused to reverse it, but even Oates received a pardon and a pension. The Whigs however wanted not merely the redress of wrongs but the punishment of the wrong-doers. Whig and Tory had been united indeed by the tyranny of James; both parties had shared in the Revolution, and William had striven to prolong their union by joining the leaders of both in his first Ministry. He named the Tory Earl of Danby Lord President, made the Whig Earl of Shrewsbury Secretary of State, and gave the Privy Seal to Lord Halifax, a trimmer between the one party and the other. But save

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in a moment of common oppression or common danger union was impossible. The Whigs clamoured for the punishment of Tories who had joined in the illegal acts of Charles and of James, and refused to pass the Bill of General Indemnity which William laid before them. William on the other hand was resolved that no bloodshed or proscription should follow the revolution which had placed him on the throne. His temper was averse from persecution; he had no great love for either of the battling parties; and above all he saw that internal strife would be fatal to the effective prosecution of the war.

While the cares of his new throne were chaining him to England the confederacy of which he was the guiding spirit was proving too slow and too loosely compacted to cope with the swift and resolute movements of France. The armies of Lewis had fallen back within their own borders, but only to turn fiercely at bay. Even the junction of the English and Dutch fleets failed to assure them the mastery of the seas. The English navy was paralysed by the corruption which prevailed in the public service, as well as by the sloth and incapacity of its commander. The services of Admiral Herbert at the Revolution had been rewarded by the earldom of Torrington and the command of the fleet; but his indolence suffered the seas to be swept by French privateers, and his want of seamanship was shown in an indecisive engagement with a French squadron in Bantry Bay. Meanwhile Lewis was straining every nerve to win the command of the Channel; the French dockyards were turning out ship after ship, and the galleys of the Mediterranean fleet were brought round to reinforce the fleet at Brest. A French victory off the English coast would have brought serious political danger; for the reaction of popular feeling which had begun in favour of James had been increased by the pressure of the war, by the taxation, by the expulsion of the Nonjurors and the discontent of the clergy, by the panic of the Tories at the spirit of vengeance which broke out among the triumphant Whigs, and above

CHAP. III. all by the presence of James in Ireland. A new party, that of the Jacobites or adherents of King James, was forming around the Nonjurors; and it was feared that a Jacobite rising would follow the appearance of a French fleet on the coast.

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In such a state of affairs William judged rightly that to yield to the Whig thirst for vengeance would have been to ruin his cause. He dissolved the Parliament, and issued in his own name a general pardon for all political offences under the title of an Act of Grace. Bitterly as both measures were resented by the Whigs, the result of the elections proved that William had only expressed the general temper of the nation. In the new Parliament which met in 1690 the bulk of the members proved Tories. The boroughs had been alienated from the Whigs by their refusal to pass the Indemnity and their desire to secure the Corporations for their own party by driving from them all who had taken part in the Tory misgovernment under Charles or James. In the counties the discontent of the clergy told as heavily against the Whigs; and parson after parson led his flock in a body to the poll. The change of temper in the Parliament necessarily brought about a change among the king's advisers. William accepted the resignation of the more violent Whigs among his counsellors and placed Danby at the head of affairs. His aim in this sudden change of front was not only to meet the change in the national spirit, but to secure a momentary lull in English faction which would suffer him to strike at the rebellion in Ireland. While James was King in Dublin the attempt to crush treason at home was a hopeless one; and so urgent was the danger, so precious every moment in the present juncture of affairs, that William could trust no one to bring the work as sharply to an end as was needful save himself. In the autumn of the year 1689 the Duke of Schomberg, an exiled Huguenot who had followed William in his expedition to England and was held to be one of the most skilful captains of the time, had been sent with a small

force to Ulster to take advantage of the panic which had followed the relief of Londonderry. James indeed was already talking of flight, and looked upon the game as hopeless. But the spirit of the Irish people rose quickly from their despair, and the duke's landing roused the whole nation to a fresh enthusiasm. The ranks of the Irish army were filled up at once, and James was able to face the duke at Drogheda with a force double that of his opponent. Schomberg, whose men were all raw recruits whom it was hardly possible to trust at such odds in the field, did all that was possible when he entrenched himself at Dundalk and held his ground in a camp where pestilence swept off half his numbers.

Winter at last parted the two armies, and during the next six months James, whose treasury was utterly exhausted, strove to fill it by a coinage of brass money while his soldiers subsisted by sheer plunder. William meanwhile was toiling hard on the other side of the Channel to bring the Irish war to an end. Schomberg was strengthened during the winter with men and stores, and when the spring came his force reached thirty thousand men. Lewis too felt the importance of the coming struggle. Seven thousand picked Frenchmen under the Count of Lauzun were despatched to reinforce the army of James, but they had hardly arrived when William himself landed at Carrickfergus and pushed rapidly with his whole army to the south. His columns soon caught sight of the Irish forces, hardly exceeding twenty thousand men in number but posted strongly behind the Boyne. Lauzun had hoped by falling back on Dublin to prolong a defensive war, but retreat was now impossible. "I am glad to see you, gentlemen," William cried with a burst of delight; "and if you escape me now the fault will be mine." Early next morning, the first of July 1690, the whole English army plunged into the river. The Irish foot, who at first fought well broke in a sudden panic as soon as the passage of the river was effected, but the horse made so gallant a stand

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CHAP. III. that Schomberg fell in repulsing its charge and for a time the English centre was held in check. With the arrival of William however at the head of his left wing all was over. James, who had throughout been striving to secure the withdrawal of his troops to the nearest defile rather than frankly to meet William's onset, abandoned his troops as they fell back in retreat upon Dublin, and took ship at Kinsale for France.

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But though James had fled in despair, and though the beaten army was forced by William's pursuit to abandon the capital, it was still resolute to fight. The incapacity of the Stuart sovereign moved the scorn even of his followers. "Change kings with us," an Irish officer replied to an Englishman who taunted him with the panic of the Boyne, "change kings with us and we will fight you again." They did better in fighting without a king. The French indeed withdrew scornfully from the routed army as it turned at bay beneath the walls of Limerick. "Do you call these ramparts?" sneered Lauzun: "the English will need no cannon; they may batter them down with roasted apples." But twenty thousand Irish soldiers remained with Sarsfield, a brave and skilful officer who had seen service in England and abroad; and his daring surprise of the English ammunition train, his repulse of a desperate attempt to storm the town, and the approach of winter forced William to raise the siege. The course of the war abroad recalled him to England, but he was hardly gone when a new turn was given to the struggle by one who was quietly proving himself a master in the art of war. Churchill, rewarded for his opportune desertion of James with the earldom of Marlborough, had been recalled from Flanders to command a division which landed in the south of Ireland. Only a few days remained before the operations were interrupted by the coming of winter, but the few days were turned to good account. The two ports by which alone Ireland could receive supplies from France fell into English hands. Cork, with five thousand men

behind its walls, was taken in forty-eight hours. Kinsale a few days later shared the fate of Cork. Winter indeed left Connaught and the greater part of Munster in Irish hands, the French force remained untouched, and the coming of a new French general, St. Ruth, with arms and supplies encouraged the insurgents. But the summer of 1691 had hardly begun when Ginkell, the new English general, by his seizure of Athlone forced on a battle with the combined French and Irish forces at Aughrim, in which St. Ruth fell on the field and his army was utterly broken.

The defeat at Aughrim left Limerick alone in its revolt, and in October Sarsfield bowed to the necessity of surrender. Two treaties were drawn up between the Irish and English generals. By the first it was stipulated that the Catholics of Ireland should enjoy such privileges in the exercise of their religion as were consistent with law, or as they had enjoyed in the reign of Charles the Second. The Crown pledged itself also to summon a Parliament as soon as possible, and to endeavour to procure to the good Roman Catholics such further security in that particular as "may preserve them from any disturbance upon the account of the said religion." By the military treaty those of Sarsfield's soldiers who would were suffered to follow him to France; and ten thousand men, the whole of his force, chose exile rather than life in a land where all hope of national freedom was lost. When the wild cry of the women who stood watching their departure was hushed the silence of death settled down upon Ireland. For a hundred years the country remained at peace. But the peace was a peace of despair. No Englishman who loves what is noble in the English temper can tell without sorrow and shame the story of that time of guilt. The work of oppression, it is true, was done not directly by England but by the English settlers in Ireland; and the cruelty of their rule sprang in great measure from the sense of danger and the atmosphere of panic in

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which the Protestants lived. But if thoughts such as these relieve the guilt of those who oppressed they leave the fact of oppression as dark as before. The most terrible legal tyranny under which a nation has ever groaned avenged the rising under Tyrconnell. The conquered people, in Swift's bitter words of contempt, became "hewers of wood and drawers of water" to their conquerors. Such as the work was however, it was thoroughly done. Though local risings of these serfs perpetually spread terror among the English settlers in Ireland, all dream of a national revolt passed away. Till the very eve of the French Revolution Ireland ceased to be a source of political danger and anxiety to England.

French
Descent
on
England.

Short as the struggle of Ireland had been it had served Lewis well, for while William was busy at the Boyne a series of brilliant successes was restoring the fortunes of France. In Flanders the Duke of Luxembourg won the victory of Fleurus. In Italy Marshal Catinat defeated the Duke of Savoy. A success of even greater moment, the last victory which France was fated to win at sea, placed for an instant the very throne of William in peril. William never showed a cooler courage than in quitting England to fight James in Ireland at a moment when the Jacobites were only looking for the appearance of a French fleet on the coast to rise in revolt. The French minister in fact hurried the fleet to sea in the hope of detaining William in England by a danger at home; and he had hardly set out for Ireland when Tourville, the French admiral, appeared in the Channel with strict orders to fight. Orders as strict had been sent to the allied fleets to engage even at the risk of defeat; and when Tourville was met on the 30th of June 1690 by the English and Dutch fleet at Beachy Head the Dutch division at once engaged. Though utterly outnumbered it fought stubbornly in hope of Herbert's aid; but Herbert, whether from cowardice or treason, looked idly on while his allies were crushed, and withdrew with the English ships at nightfall to seek shelter

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in the Thames. The danger was as great as the shame, for Tourville's victory left him master of the Channel and his presence off the coast of Devon invited the Jacobites to revolt. But whatever the discontent of Tories and Non-jurors against William might be all signs of it vanished with the landing of the French. The burning of Teignmouth by Tourville's sailors called the whole coast to arms; and the news of the Boyne put an end to all dreams of a rising in favour of James.

Intrigues
in
England.

The natural reaction against a cause which looked for foreign aid gave a new strength for the moment to William in England; but ill luck still hung around the Grand Alliance. So urgent was the need for his presence abroad that William left as we have seen his work in Ireland undone, and crossed in the spring of 1691 to Flanders. It was the first time since the days of Henry the Eighth that an English king had appeared on the Continent at the head of an English army. But the slowness of the allies again baffled William's hopes. He was forced to look on with a small army while a hundred thousand Frenchmen closed suddenly around Mons, the strongest fortress of the Netherlands, and made themselves masters of it in the presence of Lewis. The humiliation was great, and for the moment all trust in William's fortune faded away. In England the blow was felt more heavily than elsewhere. The Jacobite hopes which had been crushed by the indignation at Tourville's descent woke up to a fresh life. Leading Tories, such as Lord Clarendon and Lord Dartmouth, opened communications with James; and some of the leading Whigs with the Earl of Shrewsbury at their head, angered at what they regarded as William's ingratitude, followed them in their course. In Lord Marlborough's mind the state of affairs raised hopes of a double treason. His design was to bring about a revolt which would drive William from the throne without replacing James on it, a revolt which would in fact give the crown to his daughter Anne whose affection for Marl-

CHAP. III. borough's wife would place the real government of England in Churchill's hands. A yet greater danger lay in the treason of Admiral Russell who had succeeded Torrington in command of the fleet.

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Russell's defection would have removed the one obstacle to a new attempt which James was resolved to make for the recovery of his throne and which Lewis had been brought to support. James had never wavered from his design of returning to England at the head of a foreign force. He abandoned Ireland as soon as his hopes of finding such a force there vanished at the Boyne; and from that moment he had sought a base of invasion in France. Lewis was the more willing to make the trial that the pressure of the war had left few troops in England. So certain was he of success that the future ambassador to the court of James was already nominated, and a treaty of commerce sketched between France and England. In the beginning of 1692 an army of thirty thousand troops was quartered in Normandy in readiness for a descent on the English coast. Nearly a half of this force was composed of the Irish regiments who had followed Sarsfield into exile after the surrender of Limerick. Transports were provided for their passage, and Tourville was ordered to cover it with the French fleet at Brest. Though Russell had twice as many ships as his opponent the belief in his purpose of betraying William's cause was so strong that Lewis ordered Tourville to engage the allied fleets at any disadvantage. But whatever Russell's intrigues may have meant he was no Herbert. All he would promise was to keep his fleet out of the way of hindering a landing. But should Tourville engage, he would promise nothing. "Do not think I will let the French triumph over us in our own seas," he warned his Jacobite correspondents. "If I meet them I will fight them, even though King James were on board." When the allied fleet, which had been ordered to the Norman coast, met the French off the heights of Barfleur his

fierce attack proved Russell true to his word. Tourville's fifty vessels were no match for the ninety ships of the allies, and after five hours of a brave struggle the French were forced to fly along the rocky coast of the Cotentin. Twenty-two of their vessels reached St. Malo; thirteen anchored with Tourville in the bays of Cherbourg and La Hogue; but their pursuers were soon upon them, and in a bold attack the English boats burnt ship after ship under the eyes of the French army.

All dread of the invasion was at once at an end; and the throne of William was secured by the detection and suppression of the Jacobite conspiracy at home which the invasion was intended to support. The battle of La Hogue was a death blow to the project of a Stuart restoration by help of foreign arms. Henceforth English Jacobitism would have to battle unaided against the throne of the Revolution. But the overthrow of the Jacobite hopes was the least result of the victory. France ceased from that moment to exist as a great naval power; for though her fleet was soon recruited to its former strength the confidence of her sailors was lost, and not even Tourville ventured again to tempt in battle the fortune of the seas. A new hope too dawned on the Grand Alliance. The spell of French triumph was broken. On land indeed the French still held their old mastery. Namur, one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, surrendered to Lewis a few days after the battle of La Hogue. An inroad into Dauphiné failed to rouse the Huguenots to revolt, and the Duke of Luxembourg maintained the glory of the French arms by a victory over William at Steinkirk. But the battle was a useless butchery in which the conquerors lost as many men as the conquered. From that moment France felt herself disheartened and exhausted by the vastness of her efforts. The public misery was extreme. "The country," Fénelon wrote frankly to Lewis, "is a vast hospital." The tide too of the war began to turn. In 1693 the campaign of Lewis in the Netherlands proved a fruitless one,

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CHAP. III. and Luxembourg was hardly able to beat off the fierce attack of William at Neerwinden. For the first time in his long career of prosperity therefore Lewis bent his pride to seek peace at the sacrifice of his conquests, and though the effort was a vain one it told that the daring hopes of French ambition were at an end and that the work of the Grand Alliance was practically done.

The Sovereignty of the Commons.
 Its final triumph however was in great measure brought about by a change which now passed over the face of English politics. In outer seeming the Revolution of 1688 had only transferred the sovereignty over England from James to William and Mary. In actual fact it had given a powerful and decisive impulse to the great constitutional progress which was transferring the sovereignty from the King to the House of Commons. From the moment when its sole right to tax the nation was established by the Bill of Rights, and when its own resolve settled the practice of granting none but annual supplies to the Crown, the House of Commons became the supreme power in the State. It was impossible permanently to suspend its sittings or in the long run to oppose its will when either course must end in leaving the Government penniless, in breaking up the army and navy, and in suspending the public service. But though the constitutional change was complete the machinery of government was far from having adapted itself to the new conditions of political life which such a change brought about. However powerful the will of the House of Commons might be it had no means of bringing its will directly to bear upon the conduct of public affairs. The Ministers who had charge of them were not its servants, but the servants of the Crown; it was from the King that they looked for direction, and to the King that they held themselves responsible. By impeachment or more indirect means the Commons could force a King to remove a Minister who contradicted their will; but they had no constitutional power to replace the fallen statesman by a Minister who would carry out their will.

CHAP. III. The result was the growth of a temper in the Lower House which drove William and his Ministers to despair. It became as corrupt, as jealous of power, as fickle in its resolves and factious in spirit as bodies always become whose consciousness of the possession of power is untempered by a corresponding consciousness of the practical difficulties or the moral responsibilities of the power which they possess. It grumbled at the ill-success of the war, at the suffering of the merchants, at the discontent of the Churchmen; and it blamed the Crown and its Ministers for all at which it grumbled. But it was hard to find out what policy or measures it would have preferred. Its mood changed, as William bitterly complained, with every hour. His own hold over it grew less day by day. It was only through great pressure that he succeeded in defeating by a majority of two a Place Bill which would have rendered all his servants and Ministers incapable of sitting in the Commons. He was obliged to use his veto to defeat a Triennial Bill which, as he believed, would have destroyed what little stability of purpose there was in the present Parliament. The Houses were in fact without the guidance of recognized leaders, without adequate information, and destitute of that organization out of which alone a definite policy can come. Nothing better proves the inborn political capacity of the English mind than that it should at once have found a simple and effective solution of such a difficulty as this. The credit of the solution belongs to a man whose political character was of the lowest type. Robert, Earl of Sunderland, had been a Minister in the later days of Charles the Second; and he had remained Minister through almost all the reign of James. He had held office at last only by compliance with the worst tyranny of his master and by a feigned conversion to the Roman Catholic faith, but the ruin of James was no sooner certain than he had secured pardon and protection from William by the betrayal of the master to whom he had sacrificed his conscience and his honour. Since the

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Lord Sunderland.

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The New Ministerial System.

As yet no Ministry in the modern sense of the term had existed. Each great officer of State, Treasurer or Secretary or Lord Privy Seal, had in theory been independent of his fellow-officers; each was the "King's servant" and responsible for the discharge of his special duties to the King alone. From time to time one Minister, like Clarendon, might tower above the rest and give a general direction to the whole course of government, but the predominance was merely personal and never permanent; and even in such a case there were colleagues who were ready to oppose or even impeach the statesman who overshadowed them. It was common for a King to choose or dismiss a single Minister without any communication with the rest; and so far was even William from aiming at ministerial unity that he had striven to reproduce in the Cabinet itself the balance of parties which prevailed outside it. Sunderland's plan aimed at replacing these independent Ministers by a homogeneous Ministry, chosen from the same party, representing the same sentiments, and bound together for common action by a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the party to which it belonged. Not only was such a plan likely to secure a unity of administration which had been unknown till then, but it gave an organization to the House of Commons which it had never had before. The Ministers who were representatives of the majority of its members became the natural leaders of the House. Small factions were drawn together into the two great parties which supported or opposed the Ministry of the Crown. Above all it brought about in the simplest

possible way the solution of the problem which had so long vexed both Kings and Commons. The new Ministers ceased in all but name to be the King's servants. They became simply an Executive Committee representing the will of the majority of the House of Commons, and capable of being easily set aside by it and replaced by a similar Committee whenever the balance of power shifted from one side of the House to the other.

Such was the origin of that system of representative government which has gone on from Sunderland's day to our own. But though William showed his own political genius in understanding and adopting Sunderland's plan, it was only slowly and tentatively that he ventured to carry it out in practice. In spite of the temporary reaction Sunderland believed that the balance of political power was really on the side of the Whigs. Not only were they the natural representatives of the principles of the Revolution, and the supporters of the war, but they stood far above their opponents in parliamentary and administrative talent. At their head stood a group of statesmen whose close union in thought and action gained them the name of the Junto. Russell, as yet the most prominent of these, was the victor of La Hogue; John Somers was an advocate who had sprung into fame by his defence of the Seven Bishops; Lord Wharton was known as the most dexterous and unscrupulous of party managers; and Montague was fast making a reputation as the ablest of English financiers. In spite of such considerations however it is doubtful whether William would have thrown himself into the hands of a purely Whig Ministry but for the attitude which the Tories took towards the war. Exhausted as France was the war still languished and the allies still failed to win a single victory. Meanwhile English trade was all but ruined by the French privateers and the nation stood aghast at the growth of taxation. The Tories, always cold in their support of the Grand Alliance, now became eager for peace. The Whigs on

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William, in whose mind the contest with France was the first object, was thus driven slowly to follow Sunderland's advice. Already in 1694 indeed Montague established his political position and weakened that of the Tory Ministers by his success in a great financial measure which at once relieved the pressure of taxation and added strength to the new monarchy. The war could be kept up only by loans: and loans were still raised in England by personal appeal to a few London goldsmiths in whose hands men placed money for investment. But the bankruptcies which followed the closing of the Exchequer by the Cabal had shaken public confidence in the goldsmiths, while the dread of a restoration of James made these capitalists appear shy of the Ministers' appeals for aid. Money therefore could only be raised in scanty quantities and at a heavy loss. In this emergency Montague came forward with a plan which had been previously suggested by a Scotchman, William Paterson, for the creation of a National Bank such as already existed in Holland and in Genoa. While serving as an ordinary bank for the supply of capital to commercial enterprises the Bank of England, as the new institution was called, was in reality an instrument for procuring loans from the people at large by the formal pledge of the state to repay the money advanced on the demand of the lender. For this purpose a loan of £1,200,000 was thrown open to public subscription; and the subscribers to it were formed into a chartered company in whose hands the negotiation of all after loans was placed. The plan turned out a perfect success. In ten days the list of subscribers was full. A new source of power revealed itself in this discovery of the resources afforded by the national credit and the national wealth; and the rapid growth of the National Debt, as the mass of these loans to the State came to be called, gave a new security against the return of the Stuarts

whose first work would have been the repudiation of the claims of the lenders or as they were termed the "fundholders."

The evidence of the public credit gave strength to William abroad as at home. In 1694 indeed the army of 90,000 men which he commanded in the Netherlands did no more than hold the French successfully at bay; but the English fleet rode triumphant in the Channel, ravaged and alarmed the coast of France, and foiled by its pressure the attack of a French army on Barcelona. The brighter aspect of affairs abroad coincided with a new unity of action at home. The change which Sunderland counselled was quietly carried out. One by one the Tory Ministers had been replaced by members of the Junto. Russell went to the Admiralty; Somers was named Lord Keeper; Shrewsbury, Secretary of State; Montague, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Even before this change was completed its effect was felt. The House of Commons took a new tone. The Whig majority of its members, united and disciplined, moved quietly under the direction of their natural leaders, the Whig Ministers of the Crown. It was this which enabled William to face the shock which was given to his position by the death of Queen Mary at the end of 1694. It had been provided indeed that on the death of either sovereign the survivor should retain the throne; but the renewed attacks of the Tories under Nottingham and Halifax on the war and the Bank showed what fresh hopes had been raised by William's lonely position. The Parliament however, whom the King had just conciliated by assenting at last to the Triennial Bill, went steadily with the Ministry; and its fidelity was rewarded by triumph abroad. In September, 1695, the Alliance succeeded for the first time in winning a great triumph over France in the capture of Namur. The King skilfully took advantage of his victory to call a new Parliament, and its members at once showed their temper by a vigorous support of the measures necessary for the prose-

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 The Fall of the Stuarts. William's hands. They forced him to resume the prodigal
 1683-1714. grants of lands which he had made to his Dutch favourites,
 and to remove his Ministers in Scotland who had aided in
 a wild project for a Scotch colony on the Isthmus of
 Darien. They claimed a right to name members of the
 new Board of Trade which was established in 1696 for the
 regulation of commercial matters. They rejected a pro-
 posal, never henceforth to be revived, for a censorship of
 the Press. But there was no factious opposition. So strong
 was the Ministry that Montague was enabled to face the
 general distress which was caused for the moment by a
 reform of the currency, which had been reduced by clipping
 to far less than its nominal value, and although the financial
 embarrassments created by the currency reform hindered
 any vigorous measures abroad William was able to hold
 the French at bay.

*The
Spanish
Suc-
cession.*

But the war was fast drawing to a close. The Catholic
 powers in the Grand Alliance were already in revolt against
 William's supremacy as they had been in revolt against
 that of Lewis. In 1696 the Pope succeeded in detaching
 Savoy from the league and Lewis was enabled to transfer
 his Italian army to the Low Countries. But France was now
 simply fighting to secure more favourable terms, and
 William, though he held that "the only way of treating
 with France is with our swords in our hands," was almost
 as eager as Lewis for a peace. The defection of Savoy
 made it impossible to carry out the original aim of the
 Alliance, that of forcing France back to its position at the
 Treaty of Westphalia, and a new question was drawing
 every day nearer, the question of the succession to the
 Spanish throne. The death of the King of Spain, Charles the
 Second, was now known to be at hand. With him ended
 the male line of the Austrian princes who for two hundred
 years had occupied the Spanish throne. How strangely
 Spain had fallen from its high estate in Europe the wars
 of Lewis had abundantly shown, but so vast was the extent

of its empire, so enormous the resources which still re-
 mained to it, that under a vigorous ruler men believed its
 old power would at once return. Its sovereign was still
 master of some of the noblest provinces of the Old World
 and the New, of Spain itself, of the Milanese, of Naples
 and Sicily, of the Netherlands, of Southern America, of
 the noble islands of the Spanish Main. To add such a
 dominion as this to the dominion either of Lewis or of
 the Emperor would be to undo at a blow the work of
 European independence which William had wrought;
 and it was with a view to prevent either of these results
 that William resolved to free his hands by a conclusion
 of the war.

In May negotiations were opened at Ryswick; the
 obstacles thrown in the way of an accommodation by
 Spain and the Empire were set aside in a private negotia-
 tion between William and Lewis; and peace was finally
 signed in October 1697. In spite of failure and defeat in
 the field William's policy had won. The victories of
 France remained barren in the face of a united Europe;
 and her exhaustion forced her for the first time since
 Richelieu's day to consent to a disadvantageous peace.
 On the side of the Empire France withdrew from every
 annexation save that of Strassburg which she had made
 since the Treaty of Nimegwen, and Strassburg would have
 been restored but for the unhappy delays of the German
 negotiators. To Spain Lewis restored Luxemburg and
 all the conquests he had made during the war in the
 Netherlands. The Duke of Lorraine was replaced in
 his dominions. A far more important provision of the
 peace pledged Lewis to an abandonment of the Stuart
 cause and a recognition of William as King of England.
 For Europe in general the peace of Ryswick was little
 more than a truce. But for England it was the close of a
 long and obstinate struggle and the opening of a new æra
 of political history. It was the final and decisive defeat of
 the conspiracy which had gone on between Lewis and

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William's
aims.

the Stuarts ever since the Treaty of Dover, the conspiracy to turn England into a Roman Catholic country and into a dependency of France. But it was even more than this. It was the definite establishment of England as the centre of European resistance against all attempts to overthrow the balance of power.

In leaving England face to face with France the Treaty of Ryswick gave a new turn to the policy of William. Hitherto he had aimed at saving the balance of European power by the joint action of England and the rest of the European states against France. He now saw a means of securing what that action had saved by the co-operation of France and the two great naval powers. In his new course we see the first indication of that triple alliance of France, England and Holland which formed the base of Walpole's foreign policy, as well as of that common action of England and France which since the fall of Holland has so constantly recurred to the dreams of English statesmen. Peace therefore was no sooner signed than William by stately embassies and a series of secret negotiations drew nearer to France. It was in direct negotiation and co-operation with Lewis that he aimed at bringing about a peaceful settlement of the question which threatened Europe with war. At this moment the claimants of the Spanish succession were three: the French Dauphin, a son of the Spanish King's elder sister; the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, a grandson of his younger sister; and the Emperor, who was a son of Charles's aunt. In strict law—if there had been any law really applicable to the matter—the claim of the last was the strongest of the three; for the claim of the Dauphin was barred by an express renunciation of all right to the succession at his mother's marriage with Lewis XIV., a renunciation which had been ratified at the Treaty of the Pyrenees; and a similar renunciation barred the claim of the Bavarian candidate. The claim of the Emperor was more remote in blood, but it was barred

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by no renunciation at all. William however was as resolute in the interests of Europe to repulse the claim of the Emperor as to repulse that of Lewis; and it was the consciousness that the Austrian succession was inevitable if the war continued and Spain remained a member of the Grand Alliance, in arms against France and leagued with the Emperor, which made him suddenly conclude the Peace of Ryswick.

Had England and Holland shared William's temper he would have insisted on the succession of the Electoral Prince to the whole Spanish dominions. But both were weary of war, and of the financial distress which war had brought with it. In England the peace of Ryswick was at once followed by the reduction of the army at the demand of the House of Commons to ten thousand men; and a clamour had already begun for the disbanding even of these. It was necessary therefore to bribe the two rival claimants to a waiver of their claims; and Lewis after some hesitation yielded to the counsels of his Ministers, and consented to waive his son's claims for such a bribe. The secret treaty between the three powers, which was concluded in the summer of 1698, thus became necessarily a Partition Treaty. The succession of the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was recognized on condition of the cession by Spain of its Italian possessions to his two rivals. The Milanese was to pass to the Emperor; the Two Sicilies, with the border province of Guipuzcoa, to France. But the arrangement was hardly concluded when the death of the Bavarian prince in February 1699 made the Treaty waste paper. Austria and France were left face to face; and a terrible struggle, in which the success of either would be equally fatal to the independence of Europe seemed unavoidable. The peril was the greater that the temper of both England and Holland left William without the means of backing his policy by arms. The suffering which the war had caused to the merchant class and the pressure of the debt and taxation it entailed were

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waking every day a more bitter resentment in the people of both countries. While the struggle lasted the value of English exports had fallen from four millions a year to less than three, and the losses of ships and goods at sea had been enormous. Nor had the stress been less felt within the realm. The revenue from the post-office, a fair index to the general wealth of the country, had fallen from seventy-six thousand to fifty-eight. With the restoration of peace indeed the energies of the country had quickly recovered from the shock. In the five years after the Peace of Ryswick the exports doubled themselves; the merchant-shipping was quadrupled; and the revenue of the post-office rose to eighty-two thousand pounds. But such a recovery only produced a greater disinclination to face again the sufferings of a renewed state of war.

The
second
Partition
Treaty.

The general discontent at the course of the war, the general anxiety to preserve the new gains of the peace, told alike on William and on the party which had backed his policy. In England almost every one was set on two objects, the reduction of taxes and the disbanding of the standing army. The war had raised the taxes from two millions a year to four. It had bequeathed twenty millions of debt and a fresh six millions of deficit. The standing army was still held to be the enemy of liberty, as it had been held under the Stuarts; and hardly any one realized the new conditions of political life which had robbed its existence of danger to the State. The King however resisted desperately the proposals for its disbanding; for the maintenance of the army was all important for the success of the negotiations he was carrying on. But his stubborn opposition only told against himself. Personally indeed the King still remained an object of national gratitude; but his natural partiality to his Dutch favourites, the confidence he gave to Sunderland, his cold and sullen demeanour, above all his endeavours to maintain the standing army, robbed him of popularity and of the strength which comes from popularity. The negotiations

too which he was carrying on were a secret he could not reveal; and his prayers failed to turn the Parliament from its purpose. The army and navy were ruthlessly cut down. How much William's hands were weakened by this reduction of forces and by the peace-temper of England was shown by the Second Partition Treaty which was concluded in 1700 between the two maritime powers and France. The demand of Lewis that the Netherlands should be given to the Elector of Bavaria, whose political position would always leave him a puppet in the French King's hands, was indeed successfully resisted. Spain, the Netherlands, and the Indies were assigned to the second son of the Emperor, the Archduke Charles of Austria. But the whole of the Spanish territories in Italy were now granted to France; and it was provided that Milan should be exchanged for Lorraine, whose Duke was to be summarily transferred to the new Duchy. If the Emperor persisted in his refusal to come into the Treaty the share of his son was to pass to another unnamed prince, who was probably the Duke of Savoy.

The Emperor, indifferent to the Archduke's personal interest, and anxious only to gain a new dominion in Italy for the House of Austria, stubbornly protested against this arrangement; but his protest was of little moment so long as Lewis and the two maritime powers held firmly together. The new Western Alliance indeed showed how wide its power was from the first. The mediation of England and Holland, no longer counteracted by France, secured peace between the Emperor and the Turks in the Treaty of Carlowitz. The common action of the three powers stifled a strife between Holstein and Denmark which would have set North Germany on fire. William's European position indeed was more commanding than ever. But his difficulties at home were increasing every day. In spite of the defection of their supporters on the question of a standing army the Whig Ministry for some time retained fairly its hold on the Houses. But the elections for a

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new Parliament at the close of 1698 showed the growth of a new temper in the nation. A Tory majority, pledged to peace as to a reduction of taxation and indifferent to foreign affairs, was returned to the House of Commons. The fourteen thousand men still retained in the army were at once cut down to seven. It was voted that William's Dutch guards should return to Holland. It was in vain that William begged for their retention as a personal favour, that he threatened to leave England with them, and that the ill effect of this strife on his negotiations threw him into a fever. Even before the elections he had warned the Dutch Pensionary that in any fresh struggle England could be relied on only for naval aid. He was forced to give way; and, as he expected, this open display of the peace-temper of England told fatally on the resistance he had attempted to the pretensions of France. He strove indeed to appease the Parliament by calling for the resignation of Russell and Montague, the two ministers most hated by the Tories. But all seemed in vain. The Houses no sooner met in 1699 than the Tory majority attacked the Crown, passed a Bill for resuming estates granted to the Dutch favourites, and condemned the Ministers as responsible for these grants. Again Sunderland had to intervene, and to press William to carry out the policy which had produced the Whig Ministry by its entire dismissal. Somers and his friends withdrew, and a new administration composed of moderate Tories, with Lords Rochester and Godolphin as its leading members, took their place.

Accession
of the
Duke of
Anjou.

The moment indeed was one in which the King needed at any price the co-operation of the Parliament. Spain had been stirred to bitter resentment as news of the Partition Treaty crept abroad. The Spaniards cared little whether a French or an Austrian prince sat on the throne of Charles the Second, but their pride revolted against the dismemberment of the monarchy by the loss of its Italian dependencies. The nobles too dreaded the loss of their

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vast estates in Italy and of the lucrative posts they held as governors of these dependencies. Even the dying King shared the anger of his subjects. He hesitated only whether to leave his dominions to the House of Austria or the House of Bourbon; but in either case he was resolved to leave the whole. A will wrested from him by the factions which wrangled over his deathbed bequeathed at last the whole monarchy of Spain to a grandson of Lewis, the Duke of Anjou, the second son of the Dauphin. It was doubtful indeed whether Lewis would suffer his grandson to receive the crown. He was still a member of that Triple Alliance on which for the last three years the peace of Europe had depended. The Treaty of Partition was so recent and the risk of accepting this bequest so great that Lewis would have hardly resolved on it but for his belief that the temper of England must necessarily render William's opposition a fruitless one. Never in fact had England been so averse from war. So strong was the antipathy to William's policy that men openly approved the French King's course. Hardly any one in England dreaded the succession of a boy who, French as he was, would as they believed soon be turned into a Spaniard by the natural course of events. The succession of the Duke of Anjou was generally looked upon as far better than the increase of power which France would have derived from the cessions of the last treaty of Partition. The cession of the Sicilies would have turned the Mediterranean, it was said, into a French lake, and have ruined the English trade with the Levant, while the cession of Guipuzcoa and the annexation of the west coast of Spain, which was looked on as certain to follow, would have imperilled the American trade and again raised France into a formidable power at sea. Backing all these considerations was the dread of losing by a contest with Spain and its new King the lucrative trade with the Spanish colonies. "It grieves me to the heart," William wrote bitterly, "that almost every one rejoices that France has preferred the Will

CHAP. III. to the Treaty." Astonished and angered as he was at his rival's breach of faith, he had no means of punishing it. In the opening of 1701 the Duke of Anjou entered Madrid, and Lewis proudly boasted that henceforth there were no Pyrenees.

*Seizure of
the Dutch
Barrier.*

The life-work of William seemed undone. He knew himself to be dying. His cough was incessant, his eyes sunk and dead, his frame so weak that he could hardly get into his coach. But never had he shown himself so great. His courage rose with every difficulty. His temper which had been heated by the personal affronts lavished on him through English faction, was hushed by a supreme effort of his will. His large and clear-sighted intellect looked through the temporary embarrassments of French diplomacy and English party strife to the great interests which he knew must in the end determine the course of European politics. Abroad and at home all seemed to go against him. For the moment he had no ally save Holland, for Spain was now united with Lewis, while the attitude of Bavaria divided Germany and held the House of Austria in check. The Bavarian Elector indeed, who had charge of the Spanish Netherlands and on whom William had counted, openly joined the French side from the first and proclaimed the Duke of Anjou as King in Brussels. In England a new Parliament, which had been called by way of testing public opinion, was crowded with Tories who were resolute against war. The Tory Ministry pressed him to acknowledge the new King of Spain; and as even Holland did this, William was forced to submit. He could only count on the greed of Lewis to help him, and he did not count in vain. The general approval of the French King's action had sprung from a belief that he intended honestly to leave Spain to the Spaniards under their new boy-king. Bitter too as the strife of Whig and Tory might be in England, there were two things on which Whig and Tory were agreed. Neither would suffer France to occupy the Spanish Netherlands.

Neither would endure a French attack on the Protestant succession which the Revolution of 1688 had established. But the arrogance of Lewis blinded him to the need of moderation in his hour of good-luck. The wretched defence made by the strong places of the Netherlands in the former war had brought about an agreement between Spain and Holland at its close, by which seven fortresses, including Luxemburg, Mons, and Charleroi, were garrisoned with Dutch in the place of Spanish troops. The seven were named the Dutch barrier, and the first anxiety both of Holland and of William was to maintain this arrangement under the new state of things. William laid down the maintenance of the barrier in his negotiations at Madrid as a matter of peace or war. But Lewis was too eager to wait even for the refusal of William's demand which the pride of the Spanish Court prompted. In February 1701 his troops appeared at the gates of the seven fortresses; and a secret convention with the Elector, who remained in charge of the Netherlands, delivered them into his hands to hold in trust for his grandson. Other French garrisons took possession at the same time of Ostend and the coast towns of Flanders.

The Parliament of 1701, a Parliament mainly of Tories, and in which the leader of the moderate Tories, Robert Harley, came for the first time to the front, met amidst the general panic and suspension of trade which followed this seizure of the barrier fortresses. Peace-Parliament as it was and bitterly as it condemned the Partition Treaties, it at once supported William in his demand for a withdrawal of the French troops, and authorized him to conclude a defensive alliance with Holland, which would give that State courage to join in the demand. The disclosure of a new Jacobite plot strengthened William's position. The hopes of the Jacobites had been raised in the preceding year by the death of the young Duke of Gloucester, the only living child of the Princess Anne, and who as William was childless ranked, after his mother, as heir

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Constitution which had been drawn by the Bill of Rights.

But, firm as it was in its loyalty to the Revolution, and in its resolve to maintain the independence of the Netherlands, the Parliament had still no purpose of war. It assented indeed to the alliance with Holland in the belief that the pressure of the two powers would bring Lewis to a peaceful settlement of the question. Its aim was still to avoid a standing army and to reduce taxation; and its bitterness against the Partition Treaties sprang from a belief that William had entailed on England by their means a contest which must bring back again the army and the debt. The King was bitterly blamed, while the late ministers, Somers, Russell, and Montague (now become peers), were impeached for their share in the treaties; and the Commons prayed the King to exclude the three from his counsels for ever. But a counter-prayer from the Lords gave the first sign of a reaction of opinion. Outside the House of Commons indeed the tide of national feeling rose as the designs of Lewis grew clearer. He refused to allow the Dutch barrier to be re-established; and a great French fleet gathered in the Channel to support, it was believed, a fresh Jacobite descent which was proposed by the ministers of James in a letter intercepted and laid before Parliament. Even the House of Commons took fire at this, and the fleet was raised to thirty thousand men, the army to ten thousand. But the country moved faster than the Parliament. Kent sent up a remonstrance against the factious measures by which the Tories still struggled against the King's policy, with a prayer "that addresses might be turned into Bills of Supply;" and William was encouraged by these signs of a change of temper to despatch an English force to Holland, and to conclude a secret treaty with the United Provinces for the recovery of the Netherlands from Lewis and for their transfer with the Milanese to the house of Austria as a

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means of counter-balancing the new power added to France.

England however still clung desperately to a hope of peace; and even in the Treaty with the Emperor, which followed on the French refusal to negotiate on a basis of compensation, William was far from disputing the right of Philip of Anjou to the Spanish throne. Hostilities had indeed already broken out in Italy between the French and Austrian armies; but the King had not abandoned the dream of a peaceful settlement when France by a sudden act forced him into war. Lewis had acknowledged William as King in the Peace of Ryswick and pledged himself to oppose all attacks on his throne; but in September, 1701, he entered the bedchamber at St. Germain where James the Second was breathing his last, and promised to acknowledge his son at his death as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The promise which was thus made was in fact a declaration of war, and in a moment all England was at one in accepting the challenge. The issue Lewis had raised was no longer a matter of European politics, but a question whether the work of the Revolution should be undone, and whether Catholicism and despotism should be replaced on the throne of England by the arms of France. On such a question as this there was no difference between Tory and Whig. Every Englishman backed William in his open resentment of the insult and in the recall of his ambassador. The national union showed itself in the warm welcome given to the King on his return from the Hague, where the conclusion of a new Grand Alliance in September between the Empire, Holland, and the United Provinces had rewarded William's patience and skill. The Alliance was soon joined by Denmark, Sweden, the Palatinate, and the bulk of the German States. William seized the moment of enthusiasm to dissolve the Houses whose action had hitherto embarrassed him; and though the new Parliament which met

in 1702 was still Tory in the main, its Tory members were now as much for war as the Whigs, and the House of Commons replied to the King's stirring appeal by voting forty thousand soldiers and as many sailors for the coming struggle. As a telling reply to the recognition of the young James by Lewis, a Bill of Attainder was passed against the new Pretender, and correspondence with him or maintenance of his title were made treason. At the same time all members of either House and all public officials were sworn to uphold the succession of the House of Hanover as established by law.

The King's weakness was already too great to allow of his taking the field; and he was forced to entrust the war in the Netherlands to the one Englishman who had shown himself capable of a great command. John Churchill, Earl of Marlborough, was born in 1650, the son of a Devonshire Cavalier, whose daughter became at the Restoration mistress of the Duke of York. The shame of Arabella did more perhaps than her father's loyalty to win for her brother a commission in the royal Guards; and after five years' service abroad under Turenne the young captain became colonel of an English regiment which was retained in the service of France. He had already shown some of the qualities of a great soldier, an unruffled courage, a temper naturally bold and venturesome but held in check by a cool and serene judgement, a vigilance and capacity for enduring fatigue which never forsook him. In later years he was known to spend a whole day in reconnoitring, and at Blenheim he remained on horseback for fifteen hours. But courage and skill in arms did less for Churchill on his return to the English court than his personal beauty. In the French camp he had been known as "the handsome Englishman;" and his manners were as winning as his person. Even in age his address was almost irresistible; "he engrossed the graces," says Chesterfield; and his air never lost the careless sweetness which won the favour of Lady Castlemaine. A present of

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£5,000 from the King's mistress laid the foundation of a fortune which grew rapidly to greatness, as the prudent forethought of the handsome young soldier hardened into the avarice of age.

But it was to the Duke of York that Churchill looked mainly for advancement, and he earned it by the fidelity with which as a member of his household he clung to the Duke's fortunes during the dark days of the Popish Plot. He followed James to Edinburgh and the Hague, and on his master's return he was rewarded with a peerage and the colonelcy of the Life Guards. The service he rendered James after his accession by saving the royal army from a surprise at Sedgemoor would have been yet more splendidly acknowledged but for the King's bigotry. In spite of his master's personal solicitations Churchill remained true to Protestantism. But he knew James too well to count on further favour after a formal refusal to abandon his faith. Luckily for him he had now found a new groundwork for his fortunes in the growing influence of his wife over the King's second daughter, Anne; and at the crisis of the Revolution the adherence of Anne to the cause of Protestantism was of the highest value. No sentiment of gratitude to his older patron hindered Marlborough from corresponding with the Prince of Orange, from promising Anne's sympathy to William's effort, or from deserting the ranks of the King's army when it faced William in the field. His desertion proved fatal to the royal cause; but great as this service was it was eclipsed by a second. It was by his wife's persuasion that Anne was induced to forsake her father and take refuge in Danby's camp. Unscrupulous as his conduct had been, the services which Churchill thus rendered to William were too great to miss their reward. On the new King's accession he became Earl of Marlborough; he was put at the head of a force during the Irish war where his rapid successes at once won William's regard; and he was given high command in the army of Flanders.

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But the sense of his power over Anne soon turned

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Marlborough from plotting treason against James to plot treason against William. Great as was his greed of gold, he had married Sarah Jennings, a penniless beauty of Charles's court, in whom a violent and malignant temper was strangely combined with a power of winning and retaining love. Churchill's affection for her ran like a thread of gold through the dark web of his career. In the midst of his marches and from the very battle-field he writes to his wife with the same passionate tenderness. The composure which no danger or hatred could ruffle broke down into almost womanish depression at the thought of her coldness or at any burst of her violent humour. To the last he never left her without a pang. "I did for a great while with a perspective glass look upon the cliffs," he once wrote to her after setting out on a campaign, "in hopes that I might have had one sight of you." It was no wonder that the woman who inspired Marlborough with a love like this bound to her the weak and feeble nature of the Princess Anne. The two friends threw off the restraints of state, and addressed each other as "Mrs. Freeman" and "Mrs. Morley." It was on his wife's influence over her friend that the Earl's ambition counted in its designs against William. His subtle policy aimed at availing itself both of William's unpopularity and of the dread of a Jacobite restoration. His plan was to drive the King from the throne by backing the Tories in their opposition to the war, as well as by stirring to frenzy the English hatred of foreigners, and then to use the Whig dread of James's return to seat Anne in William's place. The discovery of these designs roused the King to a burst of unusual resentment. "Were I and my Lord Marlborough private persons," William exclaimed, "the sword would have to settle between us." As it was, he could only strip the Earl of his offices and command and drive his wife from St. James's. Anne followed her favourite, and the court of the Princess became the centre of the Tory opposition: while Marlborough opened a correspondence with

CHAP. III. James. So notorious was his treason that on the eve of the French invasion which was foiled by the victory of La Hogue the Earl was one of the first among the suspected persons who were sent to the Tower.

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Death of
William.

The death of Mary however forced William to recall the Princess, who became by this event his successor; and with Anne the Marlboroughs returned to court. Now indeed that Anne's succession was brought near by the rapid decay of William's health their loyalty to the throne might be counted on; and though William could not bend himself to trust the Earl again, he saw in him as death drew near the one man whose splendid talents fitted him in spite of the perfidy and treason of his life to rule England and direct the Grand Alliance in his stead. He employed Marlborough therefore to negotiate the treaty of alliance with the Emperor, and put him at the head of the army in Flanders. But the Earl had only just taken command when a fall from his horse on the twenty-first of February, 1702, proved fatal to the broken frame of William of Orange. "There was a time when I should have been glad to have been delivered out of my troubles," the dying man whispered to Portland, "but I own I see another scene, and could wish to live a little longer." He knew however that the wish was vain; and he died on the morning of the 8th of March, commending Marlborough to Anne as the fittest person to lead her armies and guide her counsels. Anne's zeal in her friend's cause needed no quickening. Three days after her accession the Earl was named Captain-General of the English forces at home and abroad, and entrusted with the entire direction of the war. His supremacy over home affairs was secured by the expulsion of the few remaining Whigs among the ministers, and the construction of a purely Tory administration with Lord Godolphin, a close friend of Marlborough's, as Lord Treasurer at its head. The Queen's affection for his wife ensured him the support of the Crown at a moment when Anne's personal popularity gave the Crown a new weight

with the nation. In England indeed party feeling for the moment died away. The Parliament called on the new accession was strongly Tory; but all save the extreme Tories were won over to the war now that it was waged on behalf of a Tory queen by a Tory general, while the most extreme of the Whigs were ready to back even a Tory general in waging a Whig war.

Abroad however William's death shook the Alliance to its base; and even Holland wavered in dread of being deserted by England in the coming struggle. But the decision of Marlborough soon did away with this distrust. Anne was made to declare from the throne her resolve to pursue with energy the policy of her predecessor. The Parliament was brought to sanction vigorous measures for the prosecution of the war. The new general hastened to the Hague, received the command of the Dutch as well as of the English forces, and drew the German powers into the Confederacy with a skill and adroitness which even William might have envied. Never indeed was greatness more quickly recognized than in the case of Marlborough. In a few months he was regarded by all as the guiding spirit of the Alliance, and princes whose jealousy had worn out the patience of the King yielded without a struggle to the counsels of his successor. His temper fitted him in an especial way to be the head of a great confederacy. Like William, he owed little of his power to any early training. The trace of his neglected education was seen to the last in his reluctance to write. "Of all things," he said to his wife, "I do not love writing." To pen a despatch indeed was a far greater trouble to Marlborough than to plan a campaign. But nature had given him qualities which in other men spring specially from culture. His capacity for business was immense. During the next ten years he assumed the general direction of the war in Flanders and in Spain. He managed every negotiation with the courts of the allies. He watched over the shifting phases of English politics. He crossed the

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Channel to win over Anne to a change in the cabinet, or hurried to Berlin to secure the due contingent of Electoral troops from Brandenburg. At one and the same moment men saw him reconciling the Emperor with the Protestants of Hungary, stirring the Calvinists of the Cevennes into revolt, arranging the affairs of Portugal, and providing for the protection of the Duke of Savoy.

But his air showed no trace of fatigue or haste or vexation. He retained to the last the indolent grace of his youth. His natural dignity was never ruffled by an outbreak of temper. Amidst the storm of battle his soldiers saw their leader "without fear of danger or in the least hurry giving his orders with all the calmness imaginable." In the cabinet he was as cool as on the battle-field. He met with the same equable serenity the pettiness of the German princes, the phlegm of the Dutch, the ignorant opposition of his officers, the libels of his political opponents. There was a touch of irony in the simple expedients by which he sometimes solved problems which had baffled cabinets. The touchy pride of the King of Prussia in his new royal dignity, when he rose from being a simple Elector of Brandenburg to a throne, made him one of the most vexatious among the allies; but all difficulty with him ceased when Marlborough rose at a state banquet and glutted his vanity by handing him a napkin. Churchill's composure rested partly on a pride which could not stoop to bare the real self within to the eyes of meaner men. In the bitter moments before his fall he bade Godolphin burn some querulous letters which the persecution of his opponents had wrung from him; "My desire," he wrote, "is that the world may continue in their error of thinking me a happy man, for I think it better to be envied than pitied." But in great measure it sprang from the purely intellectual temper of his mind. His passion for his wife was the one sentiment which tinged the colourless light in which his understanding moved. In all else he was without affection or resentment, he knew neither doubt nor regret. In

private life he was a humane and compassionate man; but if his position required it he could betray Englishmen to death or lead his army to a butchery such as that of Malplaquet. Of honour or the finer sentiments of mankind he knew nothing; and he turned without a shock from guiding Europe and winning great victories to heap up a matchless fortune by speculation and greed. He is perhaps the only instance of a man of real greatness who loved money for money's sake. No life indeed, no temper ever stood more aloof from the common life and temper of mankind. The passions which stirred the men around him, whether noble or ignoble, were to Marlborough simply elements in an intellectual problem which had to be solved by patience. "Patience will overcome all things," he writes again and again. "As I think most things are governed by destiny, having done all things we should submit with patience."

As a statesman the high qualities of Marlborough were owned by his bitterest foes. "Over the Confederacy," says Lord Bolingbroke, "he, a new, a private man, acquired by merit and management a more decided influence than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain had given to King William." But great as he was in the council, he was even greater in the field. He stands alone amongst the masters of the art of war as a captain whose victories began at an age when the work of most men is done. Though he served as a young officer under Turenne, and for a few months in Ireland and the Netherlands, Marlborough had held no great command till he took the field in Flanders at the age of fifty-two. He stands alone too in his unbroken good fortune. Voltaire notes that he never besieged a fortress which he did not take, or fought a battle which he did not win. His difficulties indeed came not so much from the enemy as from the ignorance and timidity of his own allies. He was never defeated in the field, but victory after victory was snatched from him by the incapacity of his officers or

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CHAP. III. the stubbornness of the Dutch. What startled the cautious strategists of his day was the vigour and audacity of his plans. Old as he was, Marlborough's designs had from the first all the dash and boldness of youth. On taking the field in 1702 he at once resolved to force a battle in the heart of Brabant. The plan was foiled by the timidity and resistance of the Dutch deputies. But his resolute advance across the Meuse drew the French forces from that river and enabled him to reduce fortress after fortress in a series of sieges, till the surrender of Liège closed a campaign which cut off the French from the Lower Rhine and freed Holland from all danger of invasion.

*The
French in
Germany.*

The successes of Marlborough had been brought into bolder relief by the fortunes of the war in other quarters. Though the Imperialist general, Prince Eugène of Savoy, showed his powers by a surprise of the French army at Cremona, no real successes had been won in Italy. An English descent on the Spanish coast ended in failure. In Germany, where the Bavarians joined the French, their united armies defeated the army of the Empire and opened the line of the Danube to a French advance. It was in this quarter that Lewis resolved to push his fortunes in the coming year. In the spring of 1703 a French army under Marshal Villars again relieved the Bavarian Elector from the pressure of the Austrian forces, and only a strife which arose between the two commanders hindered their joint armies from marching on Vienna. Meanwhile the timidity of the Dutch deputies served Lewis well in the Low Countries. The hopes of Marlborough, who had been raised to a Dukedom for his services in the previous year, were again foiled by the deputies of the States-General. Serene as his temper was, it broke down before their refusal to co-operate in an attack on Antwerp and French Flanders; and the prayers of Godolphin and of the pensionary Heinsius alone induced him to withdraw his offer of resignation. In spite of his victories on the Danube, indeed, of the blunders of his adversaries on the Rhine,

and the sudden aid of an insurrection against the Court of Vienna which broke out in Hungary, the difficulties of Lewis were hourly increasing. The accession of Savoy to the Grand Alliance threatened his armies in Italy with destruction. That of Portugal gave the allies a base of operations against Spain. The French King's energy however rose with the pressure; and while the Duke of Berwick, a natural son of James the Second, was despatched against Portugal, and three small armies closed round Savoy, the flower of the French troops joined the army of Bavaria on the Danube, for the bold plan of Lewis was to decide the fortunes of the war by a victory which would wrest peace from the Empire under the walls of Vienna.

The master-stroke of Lewis roused Marlborough at the opening of 1704 to a master-stroke in return; but the secrecy and boldness of the Duke's plans deceived both his enemies and his allies. The French army in Flanders saw in his march from the Netherlands upon Maintz only a design to transfer the war into Elsass. The Dutch on the other hand were lured into suffering their troops to be drawn as far from Flanders as Coblenz by the Duke's proposals for an imaginary campaign on the Moselle. It was only when Marlborough crossed the Neckar and struck through the centre of Germany for the Danube that the true aim of his operations was revealed to both. After struggling through the hill country of Wurtemberg he joined the Imperial army under the Prince of Baden, stormed the heights of Donauwerth, crossed the Danube and the Lech, and penetrated into the heart of Bavaria. The crisis drew two other armies which were facing one another on the Upper Rhine to the scene. The arrival of Marshal Tallard with thirty thousand French troops saved the Elector of Bavaria for the moment from the need of submission; but the junction of his opponent, Prince Eugene, with Marlborough raised the contending forces again to an equality. After a few marches the armies met on the north bank of the Danube near the small town

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of Hochstadt and the village of Blindheim or Blenheim, which have given their names to one of the most memorable battles in the history of the world.

In one respect the struggle which followed stands almost unrivalled, for the whole of the Teutonic race was represented in the strange medley of Englishmen, Dutchmen, Hanoverians, Danes, Wurtembergers and Austrians who followed Marlborough and Eugene. The French and Bavarians, who numbered like their opponents some fifty thousand men, lay behind a little stream which ran through swampy ground to the Danube. Their position was a strong one, for its front was covered by the swamp, its right by the Danube, its left by the hill-country in which the stream rose; and Tallard had not only entrenched himself but was far superior to his rival in artillery. But for once Marlborough's hands were free. "I have great reason," he wrote calmly home, "to hope that everything will go well, for I have the pleasure to find all the officers willing to obey without knowing any other reason than that it is my desire, which is very different from what it was in Flanders, where I was obliged to have the consent of a council of war for everything I undertook." So formidable were the obstacles, however, that though the allies were in motion at sunrise on the 13th of August it was not till midday that Eugene, who commanded on the right, succeeded in crossing the stream. The English foot at once forded it on the left, and attacked the village of Blindheim in which the bulk of the French infantry were entrenched; but after a furious struggle the attack was repulsed, while as gallant a resistance at the other end of the line held Eugene in check. It was the centre however, where the French believed themselves to be unassailable, and which this belief had led them to weaken by drawing troops to their wings, that had been chosen by Marlborough from the first for the chief point of attack. By making an artificial road across the morass which covered it, he was at last enabled to throw his

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eight thousand horsemen on the mass of the French cavalry, which occupied this position; and two desperate charges which the Duke headed in person decided the day. The French centre was flung back on the Danube and forced to surrender. Their left fell back in confusion on Hochstadt: while their right, cooped up in Blindheim and cut off from retreat, became prisoners of war. Of the defeated army only twenty thousand men escaped. Twelve thousand were slain, fourteen thousand were captured. Vienna was saved, Germany finally freed from the French, and Marlborough, who followed the wreck of the French host in its flight to Elsass, soon made himself master of the Lower Moselle.

But the loss of France could not be measured by men or fortresses. A hundred victories since Rocroi had taught the world to regard the armies of Lewis as all but invincible, when Blenheim and the surrender of the flower of the French soldiery broke the spell. From that moment the terror of victory passed to the side of the allies, and "Malbrook" became a name of fear to every child in France. In England itself the victory of Blenheim aided to bring about a great change in the political aspect of affairs. The Tories were already pressing hard on the defeated Whigs. If they were willing to support the war abroad, they were resolved to use the accession of a Stuart to the throne to secure their own power at home. They resolved therefore to make a fresh attempt to create a permanent Tory majority in the Commons by excluding Nonconformists from the municipal corporations, which returned the bulk of the borough members, and whose political tendencies were for the most part Whig. The test of receiving the sacrament according to the ritual of the Church of England, effective as it was against Catholics, was useless against Protestant Dissenters. While adhering to their separate congregations, in which they were now protected by the Toleration Act, they 'qualified for office,' as it was called, by the 'occasional

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CHAP. III. conformity' of receiving the sacrament at church once in the year. It was against 'occasional conformity' that the Tories introduced a test which by excluding the Nonconformists would have given them the command of the boroughs; and this test at first received Marlborough's support. But it was rejected by the Lords as often as it was sent up to them, and it was soon guessed that the resistance of the Lords was secretly backed by both Marlborough and Godolphin. Tory as he was, in fact, Marlborough had no mind for an unchecked Tory rule, or for a measure which would be fatal to the war by again reviving religious strife. But it was in vain that he strove to propitiate his party by inducing the Queen to set aside the tenths and first-fruits hitherto paid by the clergy to the Crown as a fund for the augmentation of small benefices, a fund which still bears the name of Queen Anne's Bounty. The Commons showed their resentment against Marlborough by refusing to add a grant of money to the grant of a Dukedom after his first campaign; and the higher Tories, with Lord Nottingham at their head, began to throw every obstacle they could in the way of the continuance of the war.

The Coalition Ministry. Nottingham and his followers at last quitted office in 1704, and Marlborough replaced them by Tories of a more moderate stamp who were still in favour of the war; by Robert Harley, who became Secretary of State, and by Henry St. John, a young man of splendid talents, who was named Secretary at War. Small as the change seemed, its significance was clear to both parties; and the Duke's march into Germany gave his enemies an opportunity of embittering the political strife. The original aim of the Tories had been to limit English efforts to what seemed purely English objects, the defence of the Netherlands and of English commerce; and the bulk of them shrank even now from any further entanglement in the struggle. But the Duke's march seemed at once to pledge England to a strife in the very heart of the

Continent, and above all to a strife on behalf of the House of Austria, whose designs upon Spain were regarded with almost as much suspicion as those of Lewis. It was an act indeed of even greater political than military daring. The High Tories and Jacobites threatened if Marlborough failed to bring his head to the block; and only the victory of Blenheim saved him from political ruin. Slowly and against his will the Duke drifted from his own party to the party which really backed his policy. He availed himself of the national triumph over Blenheim to dissolve Parliament; and when the election of 1705, as he hoped, returned a majority in favour of the war, his efforts brought about a coalition between the moderate Tories who still clung to him and the Whig Junto, whose support was purchased by making a Whig, William Cowper, Lord Keeper, and by sending Lord Sunderland as envoy to Vienna.

The bitter attacks of the peace party were entirely foiled by this union, and Marlborough at last felt secure at home. But he had to bear disappointment abroad. His plan of attack along the line of the Moselle was defeated by the refusal of the Imperial army to join him. When he transferred the war again to the Netherlands and entered the French lines across the Dyle, the Dutch generals withdrew their troops; and his proposal to attack the Duke of Villeroy in the field of Waterloo was rejected in full council of war by the deputies of the States with cries of "murder" and "massacre." Even Marlborough's composure broke into bitterness at this last blow. "Had I the same power I had last year," he wrote home, "I could have won a greater victory than that of Blenheim." On his complaint indeed the States recalled their commissaries, but the year was lost; nor had greater results been brought about in Italy or on the Rhine. The spirits of the allies were only sustained by the romantic exploits of Lord Peterborough in Spain. Profligate, unprincipled, flighty as he was, Peterborough had a genius for war, and

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Ramillies.

CHAP. III. his seizure of Barcelona with a handful of men, a step followed by his recognition of the old liberties of Aragon, roused that province to support the cause of the second son of the Emperor, who had been acknowledged as King of Spain by the allies under the title of Charles the Third. Catalonia and Valencia soon joined Aragon in declaring for Charles: while Marlborough spent the winter of 1705 in negotiations at Vienna, Berlin, Hanover, and the Hague, and in preparations for the coming campaign. Eager for freedom of action and sick of the Imperial generals as of the Dutch, he planned a march over the Alps and a campaign in Italy; and though these designs were defeated by the opposition of the allies, he found himself unfettered when he again appeared in Flanders in 1706. Marshal Villeroi, the new French general, was as eager as Marlborough for an engagement; and the two armies met on the 23rd of May at the village of Ramillies on an undulating plain which forms the highest ground in Brabant. The French were drawn up in a wide curve with morasses covering their front. After a feint on their left, Marlborough flung himself on their right wing at Ramillies, crushed it in a brilliant charge that he led in person, and swept along their whole line till it broke in a rout which only ended beneath the walls of Louvain. In an hour and a half the French had lost fifteen thousand men, their baggage, and their guns; and the line of the Scheldt, Brussels, Antwerp and Bruges became the prize of the victors. It only needed four successful sieges which followed the battle of Ramillies to complete the deliverance of Flanders.

The Union with Scotland. The year which witnessed the victory of Ramillies remains yet more memorable as the year which witnessed the final Union of England with Scotland. As the undoing of the earlier union had been the first work of the Government of the Restoration, its revival was one of the first aims of the Government which followed the Revolution. But the project was long held in check by religious and

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commercial jealousies. Scotland refused to bear any part of the English debt. England would not yield any share in her monopoly of trade with the colonies. The English Churchmen longed for a restoration of Episcopacy north of the border, while the Scotch Presbyterians would not hear even of the legal toleration of Episcopalians. In 1703 however an Act of Settlement which passed through the Scotch Parliament at last brought home to English statesmen the dangers of further delay. In dealing with this measure the Scotch Whigs, who cared only for the independence of their country, joined hand in hand with the Scotch Jacobites, who looked only to the interests of the Pretender. The Jacobites excluded from the Act the name of the Princess Sophia; the Whigs introduced a provision that no sovereign of England should be recognized as sovereign of Scotland save upon security given to the religion, freedom, and trade of the Scottish people. The danger arising from such a measure was undoubtedly great, for it pointed to a recognition of the Pretender in Scotland on the Queen's death, and such a recognition meant war between Scotland and England. The need of a union became at once apparent to every statesman, but it was only after three years' delay that the wisdom and resolution of Lord Somers brought the question to an issue. The Scotch proposals of a federative rather than a legislative union were set aside by his firmness; the commercial jealousies of the English traders were put by; and the Act of Union as it was completed in 1706, though not finally passed till the following year, provided that the two kingdoms should be united into one under the name of Great Britain, and that the succession to the crown of this United Kingdom should be ruled by the provisions of the English Act of Settlement. The Scotch Church and the Scotch law were left untouched: but all rights of trade were thrown open to both nations, a common system of taxation was established, and a uniform system of coinage adopted. A single Parliament was henceforth to represent the United

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CHAP. III. Kingdom; and for this purpose forty-five Scotch members, a number taken to represent the proportion of Scotch property and population relatively to England, were added to the five hundred and thirteen English members of the House of Commons, and sixteen representative peers to the one hundred and eight who formed the English House of Lords.

Its results.

In Scotland the opposition to this measure was bitter and almost universal. The terror of the Presbyterians indeed was met by an Act of Security which became part of the Treaty of Union, and which required an oath to support the Presbyterian Church from every sovereign on his accession. But no securities could satisfy the enthusiastic patriots or the fanatical Cameronians. The Jacobites sought troops from France and plotted a Stuart restoration. The nationalists talked of seceding from the Houses which voted for the Union and of establishing a rival Parliament. In the end however good sense and the loyalty of the trading classes to the cause of the Protestant succession won their way. The measure was adopted by the Scotch Parliament, and the Treaty of Union became a legislative Act to which Anne in 1707 gave her assent in noble words. "I desire," said the Queen, "and expect from my subjects of both nations that from henceforth they act with all possible respect and kindness to one another, that so it may appear to all the world they have hearts disposed to become one people." Time has more than answered these hopes. The two nations whom the Union brought together have ever since remained one. England gained in the removal of a constant danger of treason and war. To Scotland the Union opened up new avenues of wealth which the energy of its people turned to wonderful account. The farms of Lothian have become models of agricultural skill. A fishing town on the Clyde has grown into the rich and populous Glasgow. Peace and culture have changed the wild clansmen of the Highlands into herdsmen and farmers. Nor was the change followed by any loss of national spirit.

The world has hardly seen a mightier and more rapid development of national energy than that of Scotland after the Union. All that passed away was the jealousy which had parted since the days of Edward the First two peoples whom a common blood and common speech proclaimed to be one. The Union between Scotland and England has been real and stable simply because it was the legislative acknowledgement and enforcement of a national fact.

With the defeat of Ramillies and the conclusion of the Union, the greatness of Marlborough reached its height. In five years he had rescued Holland, saved Germany, and thrown France back on a purely defensive position. He exercised an undisputed supremacy over an alliance which embraced the greatest European powers. At home he was practically first minister, commander-in-chief, and absolute master through his wife of the Queen herself. He was looked upon as the most powerful as he was the wealthiest subject in the world. And while Marlborough's fortunes mounted to their height those of France sank to their lowest ebb. Eugene in his greatest victory broke the siege of Turin, and Lewis saw the loss of Flanders followed by the loss of Italy. Not only did Peterborough hold his ground in Spain, but Charles the Third, with an army of English and Portuguese, entered Madrid. But it was in fact only these triumphs abroad that enabled Marlborough to face the difficulties which were opening on him at home. His command of the Parliament rested now on a coalition of the Whigs with the moderate Tories who still adhered to him after his break with the more violent members of his old party. Ramillies gave him strength enough to force Anne in spite of her hatred of the Whigs to fulfil the compact with them from which this coalition had sprung, by admitting Lord Sunderland, the bitterest leader of their party, to office as Secretary of State at the close of 1706. But with the entry of Sunderland into office the system of political balance which the Duke had maintained till now began at once to break down. Constitutionally,

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Marlborough's difficulties.

CHAP. III. Marlborough's was the last attempt to govern England on other terms than those of party government, and the union of parties to which he had clung ever since his severance from the extreme Tories became every day more impossible as the growing opposition of the Tories to the war threw the Duke more and more on the support of the Whigs.

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*Triumph
of the
Whigs.*

The Whigs sold their support dearly. Sunderland's violent and imperious temper differed widely from the supple and unscrupulous nature which had carried his father, the Lord Sunderland of the Restoration, unhurt through the violent changes of his day. But he had inherited his father's conceptions of party government. He was resolved to restore a strict party administration on a purely Whig basis, and to drive the moderate Tories from office in spite of Marlborough's desire to retain them. The Duke wrote hotly home at the news of the pressure which the Whigs were putting on him. "England," he said, "will not be ruined because a few men are not pleased." Nor was Marlborough alone in his resentment. Harley foresaw the danger of his expulsion from office, and even as early as 1706 began to intrigue at court, through Mrs. Masham, a bedchamber woman of the Queen, who was supplanting the Duchess in Anne's favour, against the Whigs and against Marlborough, whom he looked upon as in the hands of the Whigs. St. John, though bound by ties of gratitude to the Duke, to whose favour he owed his early promotion to office, was driven by the same fear to share Harley's schemes. Marlborough strove to win both of them back, but the growing opposition of the Tories to the war left him helpless in the hands of the only party that steadily supported it. A factious union of the Whigs with their opponents, though it roused the Duke to a burst of unusual passion in Parliament, effected its end by convincing him of the impossibility of further resistance. The resistance of the Queen indeed was stubborn and bitter. Anne was at heart a Tory, and her old trust in

Marlborough died with his submission to the Whig demands. It was only by the threat of resignation that he had forced her to admit Sunderland to office; and the violent outbreak of temper with which the Duchess enforced her husband's will changed the Queen's friendship for her into a bitter resentment. Marlborough was forced to increase this resentment by fresh compliances with the conditions which the Whigs imposed on him, by removing Peterborough from his command as a Tory general, and by wresting from Anne her consent in 1708 to the dismissal from office of Harley and St. John with the whole of the moderate Tories whom they headed. Their removal was followed by the complete triumph of the Whigs in the admission of Lord Somers and Wharton into the ministry. Somers became President of the Council, Wharton Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, while lower posts were occupied by younger men of the same party, who were destined to play a great part in our later history, such as the young Duke of Newcastle and Robert Walpole.

Meanwhile, the great struggle abroad went steadily against France, though its progress was varied with striking alternations of success. France rose indeed with singular rapidity from the crushing blow of Ramillies. Spain was recovered for Philip in 1707 by a victory of Marshal Berwick at Almanza. Marshal Villars won fresh triumphs on the Rhine; while Eugene, who had penetrated into Provence, was driven back into Italy. In Flanders Marlborough's designs for taking advantage of his great victory were foiled by the strategy of the Duke of Vendôme and by the reluctance of the Dutch, who were now wavering towards peace. In the campaign of 1708 however Vendôme, in spite of his superiority in force, was attacked and defeated at Oudenarde; and though Marlborough was hindered from striking at the heart of France by the timidity of the English and Dutch statesmen, he reduced Lille, the strongest of its frontier fortresses, in the face of

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Oudenarde.

CHAP. III. an army of relief which numbered a hundred thousand men. The blow proved an effective one. The pride of Lewis was at last broken by defeat and by the terrible sufferings of France. He offered terms of peace which yielded all that the allies had fought for. He consented to withdraw his aid from Philip of Spain, to give up ten Flemish fortresses as a barrier for the Dutch, and to surrender to the Empire all that France had gained since the Treaty of Westphalia. He offered to acknowledge Anne, to banish the Pretender from his dominions, and to demolish the fortifications of Dunkirk, a port hateful to England as the home of the French privateers.

*Peace
rejected.*

To Marlborough these terms seemed sufficient, and for the moment he regarded peace as secure. Peace was indeed now the general wish of the nation, and the longing for it was nowhere stronger than with the Queen. Dull and sluggish as was Anne's temper, she had the pride and stubbornness of her race, and both revolted against the submission to which she was forced. If she bowed to the spirit of the Revolution by yielding implicitly to the decision of her Parliament, she held firmly to the ceremonial traditions of the monarchy of her ancestors. She dined in royal state, she touched for the evil in her progresses, she presided at every meeting of council or cabinet, she insisted on every measure proposed by her ministers being previously laid before her. She shrank from party government as an enslavement of the Crown; and claimed the right to call on men from either side to aid in the administration of the state. But if England was to be governed by a party, she was resolved that it should be her own party. She had been bred a Tory. Her youth had fallen among the storms of the Exclusion Bill, and she looked on Whigs as disguised republicans. Above all her pride was outraged by the concessions which were forced from her. She had prayed Godolphin to help her in excluding Sunderland as a thing on which the peace of her life depended. She trembled every day before the

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violent temper of the Duchess of Marlborough, and before the threat of resignation by which the Duke himself crushed her first faint efforts at revolt. She longed for a peace which would free her from both Marlborough and the Whigs, as the Whigs on the other hand were resolute for a war which kept them in power. It was on this ground that they set aside the Duke's counsels and answered the French proposals of peace by terms which made peace impossible. They insisted on the transfer of the whole Spanish monarchy to the Austrian prince. When even this seemed likely to be conceded they demanded that Lewis should with his own troops compel his grandson to give up the crown of Spain.

"If I must wage war," replied the French King, "I had rather wage it with my enemies than with my children." In a bitter despair he appealed to France; and exhausted as the country was by the struggle, the campaign of 1709 proved how nobly France answered his appeal. The terrible slaughter which bears the name of the battle of Malplaquet showed a new temper in the French soldiers. Starving as they were, they flung away their rations in their eagerness for the fight, and fell back at its close in serried masses that no efforts of Marlborough could break. They had lost twelve thousand men, but the forcing their lines of entrenchment had cost the allies a loss of double that number. Horror at such a "deluge of blood" increased the general distaste for the war; and the rejection of fresh French offers in 1710, a rejection unjustly attributed to Marlborough's desire for the lengthening out of a contest which brought him profit and power, fired at last the smouldering discontent into flame. A storm of popular passion burst suddenly on the Whigs. Its occasion was a dull and silly sermon in which a High Church divine, Dr. Sacheverell, maintained the doctrine of non-resistance at St. Paul's. His boldness challenged prosecution; but in spite of the warning of Marlborough and of Somers the Whig Ministers resolved on his impeachment before

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Sacheverell.

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the Lords, and the trial at once widened into a great party struggle. An outburst of popular enthusiasm in Sacheverell's favour showed what a storm of hatred had gathered against the Whigs and the war. The most eminent of the Tory Churchmen stood by his side at the bar, crowds escorted him to the court and back again, while the streets rang with cries of "The Church and Dr. Sacheverell." A small majority of the peers found the preacher guilty, but the light sentence they inflicted was in effect an acquittal, and bonfires and illuminations over the whole country welcomed it as a Tory triumph.

The turn of popular feeling at once roused to new life the party whom the Whigs had striven to crush. The expulsion of Harley and St. John from the Ministry had given the Tories leaders of a more subtle and vigorous stamp than the High Churchmen who had quitted office in the first years of the war; and St. John brought into play a new engine of political attack whose powers soon made themselves felt. In the *Examiner*, and in a crowd of pamphlets and periodicals which followed in its train, the humour of the poet Prior, the bitter irony of Swift, an Irish writer who was now forcing his way into fame, as well as St. John's own brilliant sophistry, spent themselves on the abuse of the war and of its general. "Six millions of supplies and almost fifty millions of debt!" Swift wrote bitterly, "the High Allies have been the ruin of us!" Marlborough was ridiculed and reviled, even his courage was called in question; he was charged with insolence, with cruelty and ambition, with corruption and greed. The virulence of the abuse would have defeated its aim had not the general sense of the people condemned the maintenance of the war, and encouraged Anne to free herself from the yoke beneath which she had bent so long. At the close of Sacheverell's trial she broke with the Duchess. Marlborough looked for support to the Whigs; but the subtle intrigue of Harley was as busy in undermining the Ministry as St. John was in openly

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attacking it. The Whigs, who knew that the Duke's league with them had simply been forced on him by the war, and who had already foiled an attempt he had made to secure himself by the demand of a grant for life of his office of Commander-in-Chief, were easily persuaded that the Queen's sole object was his personal humiliation. They looked coolly therefore on at the dismissal of Sunderland, who had now become his son-in-law, and of Godolphin, who was his closest friend. The same means were adopted to bring about the ruin of the Whigs themselves: and Marlborough, lured easily by hopes of reconciliation with his old party, looked on as coolly while Anne dismissed her Whig counsellors and named a Tory Ministry, with Harley and St. John at its head, in their place.

The time was now come for a final and decisive blow; but how great a dread Marlborough still inspired in his enemies was shown by the shameful treachery with which they still thought it needful to bring about his fall. The intrigues of Harley paled before the subtler treason of Henry St. John. Young as he was, for he had hardly reached his thirty-second year, St. John had already shown his ability as Secretary of War under Marlborough himself, his brilliant rhetoric gave him a hold over the House of Commons which even the sense of his restlessness and recklessness failed to shake, while the vigour and eloquence of his writings infused a new colour and force into political literature. He was resolute for peace; but he pressed on the work of peace with an utter indifference to all but party ends. As Marlborough was his great obstacle, his aim was to drive him from his command; and earnestly as he admired the Duke's greatness, he hounded on a tribe of libellers who assailed even his personal courage. Meanwhile St. John was feeding Marlborough's hopes of reconciliation with the Tories, till he led him to acquiesce in his wife's dismissal, and to pledge himself to a co-operation with the Tory policy. It was the Duke's belief that a

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reconciliation with the Tories was effected that led him to sanction the despatch of troops which should have strengthened his army in Flanders on a fruitless expedition against Canada, though this left him too weak to carry out a masterly plan which he had formed for a march into the heart of France in the opening of 1711. He was unable even to risk a battle or to do more than to pick up a few seaboard towns, and St. John at once turned the small results of the campaign into an argument for the conclusion of peace. Peace was indeed all but concluded. In defiance of an article of the Grand Alliance which pledged its members not to carry on separate negotiations with France, St. John, who now became Lord Bolingbroke, pushed forward through the summer of 1711 a secret accommodation between England and France. It was for this negotiation that he had crippled Marlborough's campaign; and it was the discovery of his perfidy which revealed to the Duke how utterly he had been betrayed, and forced him at last to break with the Tory Ministry.

Treaty of
Utrecht.

He returned to England; and his efforts induced the House of Lords to denounce the contemplated peace; but the support of the Commons and the Queen, and the general hatred of the war among the people, enabled Harley to ride down all resistance. At the opening of 1712 the Whig majority in the House of Lords was swamped by the creation of twelve Tory peers. Marlborough was dismissed from his command, charged with peculation, and condemned as guilty by a vote of the House of Commons. The Duke at once withdrew from England, and with his withdrawal all opposition to the peace was at an end. His flight was in fact followed by the conclusion of a Treaty at Utrecht between France, England, and the Dutch; and the desertion of his allies forced even the Emperor at last to make peace at Rastadt. By these treaties the original aim of the war, that of preventing the possession of France and Spain at once by the House of Bourbon, was silently abandoned. No precaution was in fact

taken against the dangers it involved to the balance of power, save by a provision that the two crowns should never be united on a single head, and by Philip's renunciation of all right of succession to the throne of France. The principle on which the Treaties were based was in fact that of the earlier Treaties of Partition. Spain was stripped of even more than William had proposed to take from her. Philip retained Spain and the Indies: but he ceded his possessions in Italy and the Netherlands with the island of Sardinia to Charles of Austria, who had now become Emperor, in satisfaction of his claims; while he handed over Sicily to the Duke of Savoy. To England he gave up not only Minorca but Gibraltar, two positions which secured her the command of the Mediterranean. France purchased peace by less costly concessions. She had to consent to the re-establishment of the Dutch barrier on a greater scale than before; to pacify the English resentment against the French privateers by the dismantling of Dunkirk; and not only to recognise the right of Anne to the crown, and the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover, but to consent to the expulsion of the Pretender from her soil.

The failure of the Queen's health made the succession the real question of the day, and it was a question which turned all politics into faction and intrigue. The Whigs, who were still formidable in the Commons, and who showed the strength of their party in the Lords by defeating a Treaty of Commerce in which Bolingbroke anticipated the greatest financial triumph of William Pitt and secured freedom of trade between England and France, were zealous for the succession of the House of Hanover in the well founded belief that the Elector George hated the Tories; nor did the Tories, though the Jacobite sympathies of a portion of their party forced both Harley and Bolingbroke to keep up a delusive correspondence with the Pretender, who had withdrawn to Lorraine, really contemplate any other succession than that of the Elector. But on the means

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of providing for his succession Harley and Bolingbroke differed widely. Harley, still influenced by the Presbyterian leanings of his early life, and more jealous of Lord Rochester and the high Tories he headed than of the Whigs themselves, inclined to an alliance between the moderate Tories and their opponents, as in the earlier days of Marlborough's power. The policy of Bolingbroke on the other hand was so to strengthen the Tories by the utter overthrow of their opponents that whatever might be the Elector's sympathies they could force their policy on him as King; and in the advances which Harley made to the Whigs he saw the means of ruining his rival in the confidence of his party, and of taking his place at their head. It was with this purpose that he introduced a Schism Bill, which would have hindered any Nonconformist from acting as a schoolmaster or a tutor. The success of this measure broke Harley's plans by creating a bitterer division between Tory and Whig than ever, while it humiliated him by the failure of his opposition to it. But its effects went far beyond Bolingbroke's intentions. The Whigs regarded the Bill as the first step in a Jacobite restoration, and warned the Electress Sophia that she must look for a struggle against her accession to the throne. Sophia was herself alarmed, and the more so that Anne's health was visibly breaking. In April 1714 therefore the Hanoverian ambassador demanded for the son of the Elector, the future George the Second, who had been created Duke of Cambridge, a writ of summons as peer to the coming Parliament. The aim of the demand was simply that a Hanoverian prince might be present on the spot to maintain the right of his House in case of the Queen's death. But to Anne it seemed to furnish at once a head to the Whig opposition which would render a Tory government impossible; and her anger, fanned by Bolingbroke, broke out in a letter to the aged Electress which warned her that "such conduct may imperil the succession itself."

Death of
Anne.

To Sophia the letter was a sentence of death; two days

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after she read it, as she was walking in the garden at Herrenhausen, she fell in a dying swoon to the ground. The correspondence was at once published, and necessarily quickened the alarm not only of the Whigs, but of the more moderate section of the Tories themselves. But Bolingbroke used the breach which now declared itself between himself and his rival with unscrupulous skill. Though Anne had shown her confidence in Harley by conferring on him the Earldom of Oxford, her resentment at the conduct of the Hanoverian Court was so skilfully played upon that she was brought in July to dismiss the Earl, as a partisan of the House of Hanover, and to construct a strong and united Tory Ministry which would back the Queen in her resistance to the Elector's demand. As the crisis grew nearer, both parties prepared for civil war. In the beginning of 1714 the Whigs had made ready for a rising on the Queen's death; and invited Marlborough from Flanders to head them, in the hope that his name would rally the army to their cause. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, made the Duke of Ormond, whose sympathies were known to be in favour of the Pretender's succession, Warden of the Cinque Ports, the district in which either claimant of the crown must land, while he gave Scotland in charge to the Jacobite Earl of Mar. The appointments were probably only to secure Jacobite support, for Bolingbroke had in fact no immediate apprehensions of the Queen's death, and his aim was to trim between the Court of Hanover and the Court of James while building up a strong Tory party which would enable him to meet the accession of either with a certainty of retaining power both for himself and the principles he represented. With this view he was preparing to attack both the Bank and the East India Company, the two great strongholds of the Whigs, as well as to tax the bondholders at higher rates than the rest of the community by way of conciliating the country gentry, who hated the moneyed interest which was rising into greatness beside them. But

CHAP. III. events moved faster than his plans. On the 30th of July, three days after Harley's dismissal, Anne was suddenly struck with apoplexy. The Privy Council at once assembled, and at the news the Whig Dukes of Argyle and Somerset entered the Council Chamber without summons and took their places at the board. The step had been taken in secret concert with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who was President of the Council in the Tory Ministry, but a rival of Bolingbroke and an adherent of the Hanoverian succession. The act was a decisive one. The right of the House of Hanover was at once acknowledged, Shrewsbury was nominated as Lord Treasurer by the Council, and the nomination was accepted by the dying Queen. Bolingbroke, though he remained Secretary of State, suddenly found himself powerless and neglected while the Council took steps to provide for the emergency. Four regiments were summoned to the capital in the expectation of a civil war. But the Jacobites were hopeless and unprepared; and on the death of Anne on the evening of the 10th of August, the Elector George of Hanover, who had become heir to the throne by his mother's death, was proclaimed as King of England without a show of opposition.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE HOUSE OF HANOVER.

1714—1760.

THE accession of George the First marked a change in the position of England as a member of the European Commonwealth. From the age of the Plantagenets to the age of the Revolution the country had stood apart from more than passing contact with the fortunes of the Continent; for if Wolsey had striven to make it an arbiter between France and the House of Austria the strain of the Reformation withdrew Henry and his successor from any effective interference in the strife across the Channel; and in spite of the conflict with the Armada Elizabeth aimed at the close as at the beginning of her reign mainly at keeping her realm as far as might be out of the struggle of western Europe against the ambition of Spain. Its attitude of isolation was yet more marked when England stood aloof from the Thirty Years' War, and after a fitful outbreak of energy under Cromwell looked idly on at the earlier efforts of Lewis the Fourteenth to become master of Europe. But with the Revolution this attitude became impossible. In driving out the Stuarts William had aimed mainly at enlisting England in the league against France; and France backed his effort by espousing the cause of the exiled King. To prevent the undoing of all that the Revolution had done England was forced to join the Great Alliance of the European peoples, and reluctantly as she

*England's
European
position.*

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was drawn into it she at once found herself its head. Political and military genius set William and Marlborough in the forefront of the struggle; Lewis reeled beneath the shock of Blenheim and Ramillies; and shameful as were some of its incidents the Peace of Utrecht left England the main barrier against the ambition of the House of Bourbon.

Nor was this a position from which any change of domestic policy could withdraw her. So long as a Stuart pretender threatened the throne of the Revolution, so long every adherent of the cause of the Revolution, whether Tory or Whig, was forced to guard jealously against the supremacy of the power which could alone bring about a Jacobite restoration. As the one check on France lay in the maintenance of a European concert, in her efforts to maintain this concert England was drawn out of the narrower circle of her own home interests to watch every movement of the nations from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. And not only did the Revolution set England irrevocably among the powers of Europe, but it assigned her a special place among them. The result of the alliance and the war had been to establish what was then called a "balance of power" between the great European states; a balance which rested indeed not so much on any natural equilibrium of forces as on a compromise wrung from warring nations by the exhaustion of a great struggle; but which, once recognized and established, could be adapted and readjusted, it was hoped, to the varying political conditions of the time. Of this balance of power, as recognized and defined in the Treaty of Utrecht and its successors, England became the special guardian. Her insular position made her almost the one great state which could have no dreams of continental aggrandizement; while the main aim of her policy, that of guarding the throne of the Revolution, secured her fidelity to the European settlement which offered an insuperable obstacle to a Jacobite invasion. Her only interest lay

in the maintenance of European peace on the basis of an observance of European treaties.

Nothing is at first sight more wearisome than the long line of alliances, triple and quadruple, the endless negotiations, the interminable congresses, the innumerable treaties, which make up the history of Europe during the earlier half of the eighteenth century; nor is it easy to follow with patience the meddlesome activity of English diplomacy during that period, its protests and interventions, its subsidies and guarantees, its intrigues and finessings, its bluster and its lies. But wearisome as it all is, it succeeded in its end, and its end was a noble one. Of the twenty-five years between the Revolution and the Peace of Utrecht all but five were years of war, and the five were a mere breathing-space in which the combatants on either side were girding themselves for fresh hostilities. That the twenty-five years which followed were for Europe as a whole a time of peace was due in great measure to the zeal with which England watched over the settlement that had been brought about at Utrecht. To a great extent her efforts averted war altogether; and when war could not be averted she brought it within as narrow limits and to as speedy an end as was possible. Diplomacy spent its ingenuity in countless choppings and changings of the smaller territories about the Mediterranean and elsewhere; but till the rise of Prussia under Frederick the Great it secured Europe as a whole from any world-wide struggle. Nor was this maintenance of European peace all the gain which the attitude of England brought with it. The stubborn policy of the Georgian statesmen has left its mark on our policy ever since. In struggling for peace and for the sanctity of treaties, even though the struggle was one of selfish interest, England took a ply which she has never wholly lost. Warlike and imperious as is her national temper, she has never been able to free herself from a sense that her business in the world is to seek peace alike for herself and for the nations about her, and that the best

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security for peace lies in her recognition, amidst whatever difficulties and seductions, of the force of international engagements and the sanctity of treaties. The sentiment has no doubt been deepened by other convictions, by convictions of at once a higher and a lower stamp, by a growing sense of the value of peace to an industrial nation, as by a growing sense of the moral evil and destructiveness of war. But strong as is the influence of both these sentiments on the peace-loving temper of the English people, that temper itself sprang from another source. It sprang from the sense of responsibility for the peace of the world, as a necessary condition of tranquillity and freedom at home, which grew into life with the earlier years of the eighteenth century.

England's
intellectual
influence.

Nor was this closer political contact with Europe the only result of the new attitude of England. Throughout the age of the Georges we find her for the first time exercising an intellectual and moral influence on the European world. Hitherto Italian and French impulses had told on English letters or on English thought, but neither our literature nor our philosophy had exercised any corresponding influence on the Continent. It may be doubted whether a dozen Frenchmen or Italians had any notion that a literature existed in England at all, or that her institutions were worthy of study by any social or political enquirer. But with the Revolution of 1688 this ignorance came to an end. William and Marlborough carried more than English arms across the Channel; they carried English ideas. The combination of material and military greatness with a freedom of thought and action hardly known elsewhere, which was revealed in the England that sprang from the Revolution of 1688, imposed on the imagination of men. For the first time in our history we find foreigners learning English, visiting England, seeking to understand English life and English opinion. The main curiosity that drew them was a political curiosity, but they carried back more than political conceptions. Religious and

philosophical notions crossed the Channel with politics. The world learned that there was an English literature. It heard of Shakspeare. It wept over Richardson. It bowed, even in wretched translations, before the genius of Swift. France, above all, was drawn to this study of a country so near to her, and yet so utterly unknown. If we regard its issues, the brutal outrage which drove Voltaire to England in 1726 was one of the most important events of the eighteenth century. With an intelligence singularly open to new impressions, he revelled in the freedom of social life he found about him, in its innumerable types of character, its eccentricities, its individualities. His "Philosophical Letters" revealed to Europe not only a country where utterance and opinion were unfettered, but a new literature and a new science; while his intercourse with Bolingbroke gave the first impulse to that scepticism which was to wage its destructive war with the faith of the Continent. From the visit of Voltaire to the outbreak of the French Revolution, this intercourse with England remained the chief motive power of French opinion, and told through it on the opinion of the world. In his investigations on the nature of government Montesquieu studied English institutions as closely as he studied the institutions of Rome. Buffon was led by English science into his attempt at a survey and classification of the animal world. It was from the works of Locke that Rousseau drew the bulk of his ideas in politics and education.

Such an influence could hardly have been aroused by English letters had they not given expression to what was the general temper of Europe at the time. The cessation of religious wars, the upgrowth of great states with a new political and administrative organization, the rapid progress of intelligence, showed their effect everywhere in the same rationalizing temper, extending not only over theology but over each department of thought, the same interest in political and social speculation, the same drift.

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The
general
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towards physical enquiry, the same tendency to a diffusion and popularization of knowledge. Everywhere the tone of thought became secular, scientific, prosaic; everywhere men looked away from the past with a certain contempt; everywhere the social fusion which followed on the wreck of the Middle Ages was expressing itself in a vulgarization of ideas, in an appeal from the world of learning to the world of general intelligence, in a reliance on the "common sense" of mankind. Nor was it only a unity of spirit which pervaded the literature of the eighteenth century. Everywhere there was as striking an identity of form. In poetry this showed itself in the death of the lyric, as in the universal popularity of the rhetorical ode, in the loss of all delight in variety of poetic measure, and in the growing restriction of verse to the single form of the ten-syllable line. Prose too dropped everywhere its grandeur with its obscurity; and became the same quick, clear instrument of thought in the hands of Addison as in those of Voltaire.

How strongly this had become the bent of English letters was seen in the instance of Dryden. In the struggle of the Revolution he had struck fiercely on the losing side, and England had answered his blows by a change of masters which ruined and beggared him. But it was in these later years of his life that his influence over English literature became supreme. He is the first of the great English writers in whom letters asserted an almost public importance. The reverence with which men touched in aftertime the hand of Pope, or listened to the voice of Johnson, or wandered beside his lakes with Wordsworth, dates from the days when the wits of the Revolution clustered reverently round the old man who sate in his armchair at Wills, discussing the last comedy, or recalling his visit to the blind poet of the "Paradise Lost." It was by no mere figure that the group called itself a republic of letters, and honoured in Dryden the chosen chief of their republic. He had done more than any man to create a literary class. It was his resolve

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to live by his pen that first raised literature into a profession. In the stead of gentlemen amusing a curious leisure with works of fancy, or dependants wringing bread by their genius from a patron's caprice, Dryden saw that the time had come for the author, trusting for support to the world of readers, and wielding a power over opinion which compensates for the smallness of his gains. But he was not only the first to create a literary class; he was the first to impress the idea of literature on the English mind. Master as he was alike of poetry and of prose, covering the fields both of imagination and criticism, seizing for literary treatment all the more prominent topics of the society about him, Dryden realized in his own personality the existence of a new power which was thenceforth to tell steadily on the world.

And to this power he gave for nearly a century its form and direction. In its outer shape as in its inner spirit our literature obeyed the impulse he had given it from the beginning of the eighteenth century till near its close. His influence told especially on poetry. Dryden remained a poet; even in his most argumentative pieces his subject seizes him in a poetic way, and prosaic as much of his treatment may be, he is always ready to rise into sudden bursts of imagery and fancy. But he was a poet with a prosaic end; his aim was not simply to express beautiful things in the most beautiful way, but to invest rational things with such an amount of poetic expression as may make them at once rational and poetic, to use poetry as an exquisite form for argument, rhetoric, persuasion, to charm indeed, but primarily to convince. Poetry no longer held itself apart in the pure world of the imagination, no longer concerned itself simply with the beautiful in all things, or sought for its result in the sense of pleasure which an exquisite representation of what is beautiful in man or nature stirs in its reader. It narrowed its sphere, and attached itself to man. But from all that is deepest and noblest in man it was shut off

CHAP. IV. by the reaction from Puritanism, by the weariness of religious strife, by the disbelief that had sprung from religious controversy; and it limited itself rigidly to man's outer life, to his sensuous enjoyment, his toil and labour, his politics, his society. The limitation, no doubt, had its good sides; with it, if not of it, came a greater correctness and precision in the use of words and phrases, a clearer and more perspicuous style, a new sense of order, of just arrangement, of propriety, of good taste. But with it came a sense of uniformity, of monotony, of dullness. In Dryden indeed this was combated if not wholly beaten off by his amazing force; to the last there was an animal verve and swing about the man that conquered age. But around him and after him the dullness gathered fast.

*The new
prose.*

Of hardly less moment than Dryden's work in poetry was his work in prose. In continuity and grandeur indeed, as in grace and music of phrase, the new prose of the Restoration fell far short of the prose of Hooker or Jeremy Taylor, but its clear nervous structure, its handiness and flexibility, its variety and ease, fitted it far better for the work of popularization on which literature was now to enter. It fitted it for the work of journalism, and every day journalism was playing a larger part in the political education of Englishmen. It fitted it to express the life of towns. With the general extension of prosperity and trade the town was coming into greater prominence as an element of national life; and London above all was drawing to it the wealth and culture which had till now been diffused through the people at large. It was natural that this tendency should be reflected in literature; from the age of the Restoration indeed literature had been more and more becoming an expression of the life of towns; and it was town-life which was now giving to it its character and form. As cities ceased to be regarded simply as centres of trade and money-getting, and became habitual homes for the richer and more cultured; as men

woke to the pleasure and freedom of the new life which developed itself in the street and the mall, of its quicker movement, its greater ease, its abundance of social intercourse, its keener taste, its subtler and more delicate courtesy, its flow of conversation, the stately and somewhat tedious prose-writer of days gone by passed into the briefer and nimbler essayist.

What ruled writer and reader alike was the new-found pleasure of talk. The use of coffee had only come in at the close of the civil wars; but already London and the bigger towns were crowded with coffee-houses. The popularity of the coffee-house sprang not from its coffee, but from the new pleasure which men found in their chat over the coffee-cup. And from the coffee-house sprang the Essay. The talk of Addison and Steele is the brightest and easiest talk that was ever put in print: but its literary charm lies in this, that it is strictly talk. The essayist is a gentleman who chats to a world of gentlemen, and whose chat is shaped and coloured by a sense of what he owes to his company. He must interest and entertain, he may not bore them; and so his form must be short; essay or sketch, or tale or letter. So too his style must be simple, the sentences clear and quotable, good sense ready packed for carriage. Strength of phrase, intricacy of structure, height of tone were all necessarily banished from such prose as we banish them from ordinary conversation. There was no room for pedantry, for the ostentatious display of learning, for pompousness, for affectation. The essayist had to think, as a talker should think, more of good taste than of imaginative excellence, of propriety of expression than of grandeur of phrase. The deeper themes of the world or man were denied to him; if he touches them it is superficially, with a decorous dullness, or on their more humorous side with a gentle irony that shows how faint their hold is on him. In Addison's chat the war of churches shrinks into a puppet-show, and the strife of politics loses something of its fictitious earnestness as

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the humourist views it from the standpoint of a lady's patches. It was equally impossible to deal with the fiercer passions and subtler emotions of man. Shakspeare's humour and sublimity, his fitful transitions from mood to mood, his wild bursts of laughter, his passion of tears, Hamlet or Hamlet's gravedigger, Lear or Lear's fool, would have startled the readers of the "Spectator" as they would startle the group in a modern drawing-room.

But if deeper and grander themes were denied him the essayist had still a world of his own. He felt little of the pressure of those spiritual problems that had weighed on the temper of his fathers, but the removal of the pressure left him a gay, light-hearted, good-humoured observer of the social life about him, amused and glad to be amused by it all, looking on with a leisurely and somewhat indolent interest, a quiet enjoyment, a quiet scepticism, a shy reserved consciousness of their beauty and poetry, at the lives of common men and common women. It is to the essayist that we owe our sense of the infinite variety and picturesqueness of the human world about us; it was he who for the first time made every street and every house teem with living people for us, who found a subtle interest in their bigotries and prejudice, their inconsistencies, their eccentricities, their oddities, who gave to their very dulness a charm. In a word it was he who first opened to men the world of modern fiction. Nor does English literature owe less to him in its form. Humour has always been an English quality, but with the essayist humour for the first time severed itself from farce; it was no longer forced, riotous, extravagant; it acquired taste, gentleness, adroitness, finesse, lightness of touch, a delicate colouring of playful fancy. It preserved indeed its old sympathy with pity, with passion; but it learned how to pass with more ease into pathos, into love, into the reverence that touches us as we smile. And hand in hand with this new developement of humour went a moderation won from humour, whether in matters of religion, of

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politics, or society, a literary courtesy and reserve, a well-bred temperance and modesty of tone and phrase. It was in the hands of the town-bred essayist that our literature first became urbane.

It is strange to contrast this urbanity of literature with the savage ferocity which characterized political controversy in the England of the Revolution and the Georges. Never has the strife of warring parties been carried on with so utter an absence of truth or fairness; never has the language of political opponents stooped to such depths of coarseness and scurrility. From the age of Bolingbroke to the age of Burke the gravest statesmen were not ashamed to revile one another with invective only worthy of the fish-market. And outside the legislature the tone of attack was even more brutal. Grub-street ransacked the whole vocabulary of abuse to find epithets for Walpole. Gay amidst general applause set the statesmen of his day on the public stage in the guise of highwaymen and pick-pockets. "It is difficult to determine," said the witty playwright, "whether the fine gentlemen imitate the gentlemen of the road, or the gentlemen of the road the fine gentlemen." Much of this virulence sprang, no doubt, from a real contempt of the selfishness and corruption which disgraced the politics of the time, but it was far from being wholly due to this. In selfishness and corruption indeed the statesmen of the Georgian era were no worse than their predecessors; while in fidelity to principles and a desire for the public good they stood immeasurably above them. The standard of political action had risen with the Revolution. Cynic as was Walpole, jobber as was Newcastle, it would be absurd to compare their conception of public duty, their conduct of public affairs, with that of the Danbys and Sunderlands of the Restoration.

What had really happened was a change not in the attitude of statesmen towards the nation, but in the attitude of the nation at large towards the class that governed it.

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CHAP. IV. the humourist views it from the standpoint of a lady's patches. It was equally impossible to deal with the fiercer passions and subtler emotions of man. Shakspeare's humour and sublimity, his fitful transitions from mood to mood, his wild bursts of laughter, his passion of tears, Hamlet or Hamlet's gravedigger, Lear or Lear's fool, would have startled the readers of the "Spectator" as they would startle the group in a modern drawing-room.

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From the triumph of Puritanism in 1640 the supreme, irresistible force in English politics had been national opinion. It created the Long Parliament. It gave it its victory over the Church and the Crown. When a strange turn of events placed Puritanism in antagonism to it, it crushed Puritanism as easily as it had crushed Royalty. It was national opinion which restored the Stuarts; and no sooner did the Stuarts cross its will than it threatened their throne in the Popish Plot and swept them from the country in the Revolution. The stubborn purpose of William wrestled in vain with its turns of sentiment; even the genius of Marlborough proved helpless in a contest with it. It was indeed irresistible whenever it acted. But as yet it acted only by spurts. It had no wish to interfere with the general course of administration or policy; in the bulk of the nation indeed there was neither the political knowledge nor the sustained interest in politics which could have prompted such an interference. It was only at critical moments, when great interests were at stake, interests which it could understand and on which its mind was made up, that the nation roused itself and "shook its mighty mane." The reign of the Stuarts indeed did much to create a more general and continuous attention to public affairs. In the strife of the Exclusion Bill and in the Popish Plot Shaftesbury taught how to "agitate" opinion, how to rouse this lagging attention, this dormant energy of the people at large; and his opponents learned the art from him. The common statement that our two great modern parties, the Whig and the Tory, date from the Petitioners and Abhorers of the Exclusion Bill is true only in this sense, that then for the first time the masses of the people were stirred to a more prolonged and organized action in co-operation with the smaller groups of professed politicians than they had ever been stirred to before.

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The Revolution of 1688 was the crowning triumph of this public opinion. But for the time it seemed a suicidal

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triumph. At the moment when the national will claimed to be omnipotent, the nation found itself helpless to carry out its will. In making the revolution it had meant to vindicate English freedom and English Protestantism from the attacks of the Crown. But it had never meant to bring about any radical change in the system under which the Crown had governed England or under which the Church had been supreme over English religion. The England of the Revolution was little less Tory in feeling than the England of the Restoration; it had no dislike whatever to a large exercise of administrative power by the sovereign, while it was stubbornly averse from Nonconformity or the toleration of Nonconformity. That the nation at large remained Tory in sentiment was seen from the fact that in every House of Commons elected after the Revolution the majority was commonly Tory; it was only indeed when their opposition to the war and the patriotic feeling which it aroused rendered a Tory majority impossible that the House became Whig. And even in the height of Whig rule and amidst the blaze of Whig victories, England rose in the Sacheverell riots, forced Tories again into power, and ended the Whig war by what it deemed a Tory peace. And yet every Englishman knew that from the moment of the Revolution the whole system of government had not been Tory but Whig. Passionate as it was for peace and for withdrawal from all meddling in foreign affairs, England found itself involved abroad in ever-widening warfare and drawn into a guardianship of the whole state of Europe. At home it was drifting along a path that it hated even more. Every year saw the Crown more helpless, and the Church becoming as helpless as the Crown. The country hated a standing army, and the standing army existed in spite of its hate; it revolted against debt and taxation, and taxes and debt grew heavier and heavier in the teeth of its revolt. Its prejudice against Nonconformists remained as fanatical as ever, and yet Nonconformists worshipped in their chapels and served

CHAP. IV. as aldermen or mayors with perfect security. What made this the bitterer was the fact that neither a change of ministers nor of sovereign brought about any in the system of government. Under the Tory Anne the policy of England remained practically as Whig as under the Whig William. Nottingham and Harley did as little to restore the monarchy or the Church as Somers or Godolphin.

*Helplessness
of the
Tories.*

In driving James to a foreign land, indeed, in making him dependent on a foreign Court, the Revolution had effectually guarded itself from any undoing of its work. So long as a Stuart Pretender existed, so long as he remained a tool in the hands of France, every monarch that the Revolution placed on the English throne, and every servant of such a monarch, was forced to cling to the principles of the Revolution and to the men who were most certain to fight for them. With a Parliament of landed gentry and Churchmen behind him Harley could not be drawn into measures which would effectively alienate the merchant or the Dissenter; and if Bolingbroke's talk was more reckless, time was not given to show whether his designs were more than talk. There was in fact but one course open for the Tory who hated what the Revolution had done, and that was the recall of the Stuarts. Such a recall would have brought him much of what he wanted. But it would have brought him more that he did not want. Tory as he might be, he was in no humour to sacrifice English freedom and English religion to his Toryism, and to recall the Stuarts was to sacrifice both. None of the Stuart exiles would forsake their faith; and promise what they might, England had learned too well what such pledges were worth to set another Catholic on the throne. The more earnest a Catholic he was indeed, and no one disputed the earnestness of the Stuarts, the more impossible was it for him to reign without striving to bring England over to Catholicism; and there was no means of even making such an attempt save by repeating the struggle of James the Second and by the

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overthrow of English liberty. It was the consciousness that a Stuart restoration was impossible that egged Bolingbroke to his desperate plans for forcing a Tory policy on the monarchs of the Revolution. And it was the same consciousness that at the crisis which followed the death of Anne made the Tory leaders deaf to the frantic appeals of Bishop Atterbury. To submit again to Whig rule was a bitter thing for them; but to accept a Catholic sovereign was an impossible thing. And yet every Tory felt that with the acceptance of the House of Hanover their struggle against the principles of the Revolution came practically to an end. Their intrigues with the Pretender, the strife which they had brought about between Anne and the Electress Sophia, their hesitation if not their refusal to frankly support the succession of her son, were known to have sown a deep distrust of the whole Tory party in the heart of the new sovereign; and though in the first ministry which he formed a few posts were offered to the more moderate of their leaders, the offer was so clearly a delusive one that they refused to take office.

The refusal not only deepened the chasm between party and party; it placed the Tories in open opposition to the Hanoverian Kings. It did even more, for it proclaimed a temper of despair which withdrew them as a whole from any further meddling with political affairs. "The Tory party," Bolingbroke wrote after Anne's death, "is gone." In the first House of Commons indeed which was called by the new King, the Tories hardly numbered fifty members; while a fatal division broke their strength in the country at large. In their despair the more vehement among them turned to the Pretender. Bolingbroke and the Duke of Ormond fled from England to take office under the son of King James, James the Third, as he was called by his adherents. At home Sir William Wyndham seconded their efforts by building up a Jacobite faction out of the wreck of the Tory party. The Jacobite secession gave little help to the Pretender, while it dealt a fatal blow

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CHAP. IV. to the Tory cause. England was still averse from a return of the Stuarts; and the suspicion of Jacobite designs not only alienated the trading classes, who shrank from the blow to public credit which a Jacobite repudiation of the debt would bring about, but deadened the zeal even of the parsons and squires. The bulk however of the Tory party were far from turning Jacobites, though they might play at disloyalty out of hatred of the House of Hanover, and solace themselves for the triumph of their opponents by passing the decanter over the water-jug at the toast of "the King." What they did was to withdraw from public affairs altogether; to hunt and farm and appear at quarter-sessions, and to leave the work of government to the Whigs.

The Whigs and the Church.

While the Whigs were thus freed from any effective pressure from their political opponents they found one of their great difficulties becoming weaker with every year that passed. Up to this time the main stumbling-block to the Whig party had been the influence of the Church. But predominant as that influence seemed at the close of the Revolution, the Church was now sinking into political insignificance. In heart indeed England remained religious. In the middle class the old Puritan spirit lived on unchanged, and it was from this class that a religious revival burst forth at the close of Walpole's administration which changed after a time the whole tone of English society. But during the fifty years which preceded this outburst we see little save a revolt against religion and against churches in either the higher classes or the poor. Among the wealthier and more educated Englishmen the progress of free enquiry, the aversion from theological strife which had been left behind them by the Civil Wars, the new political and material channels opened to human energy were producing a general indifference to all questions of religious speculation or religious life. In the higher circles "every one laughs," said Montesquieu on his visit to England, "if

one talks of religion." Of the prominent statesmen of the time the greater part were unbelievers in any form of Christianity, and distinguished for the grossness and immorality of their lives. Drunkenness and foul talk were thought no discredit to Walpole. A later prime minister, the Duke of Grafton, was in the habit of appearing with his mistress at the play. Purity and fidelity to the marriage vow were sneered out of fashion; and Lord Chesterfield, in his letters to his son, instructs him in the art of seduction as part of a polite education.

At the other end of the social scale lay the masses of the poor. They were ignorant and brutal to a degree which it is hard to conceive, for the increase of population which followed on the growth of towns and the development of commerce had been met by no effort for their religious or educational improvement. Not a new parish had been created. Hardly a single new church had been built. Schools there were none, save the grammar schools of Edward and Elizabeth. The rural peasantry, who were fast being reduced to pauperism by the abuse of the poor-laws, were left without much moral or religious training of any sort. "We saw but one Bible in the parish of Cheddar," said Hannah More at a far later time, "and that was used to prop a flower-pot." Within the towns things were worse. There was no effective police; and in great outbreaks the mob of London or Birmingham burnt houses, flung open prisons, and sacked and pillaged at their will. The criminal class gathered boldness and numbers in the face of ruthless laws which only testified to the terror of society, laws which made it a capital crime to cut down a cherry tree, and which strung up twenty young thieves of a morning in front of Newgate; while the introduction of gin gave a new impetus to drunkenness. In the streets of London gin-shops at one time invited every passer-by to get drunk for a penny, or dead drunk for twopence. Much of this social degradation was due without doubt to the apathy

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and sloth of the priesthood. A shrewd, if prejudiced, observer, Bishop Burnet, brands the English clergy of his day as the most lifeless in Europe, "the most remiss of their labours in private and the least severe of their lives." A large number of prelates were mere Whig partizans with no higher aim than that of promotion. The levées of the Ministers were crowded with lawn sleeves. A Welsh bishop avowed that he had seen his diocese but once, and habitually resided at the lakes of Westmoreland. The system of pluralities which enabled a single clergyman to hold at the same time a number of livings turned the wealthier and more learned of the clergy into absentees, while the bulk of them were indolent, poor, and without social consideration.

Their religious inactivity told necessarily on their political influence; but what most weakened their influence was the severance between the bulk of the priesthood and its natural leaders. The bishops, who were now chosen exclusively from among the small number of Whig ecclesiastics, were left politically powerless by the estrangement and hatred of their clergy; while the clergy themselves, drawn by their secret tendencies to Jacobitism, stood sulkily apart from any active interference with public affairs. The prudence of the Whig statesmen aided to maintain this ecclesiastical immobility. The Sacheverell riots had taught them what terrible forces of bigotry and fanaticism lay slumbering under this thin crust of inaction, and they were careful to avoid all that could rouse these forces into life. When the Dissenters pressed for a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, Walpole openly avowed his dread of awaking the passions of religious hate by such a measure, and satisfied them by an annual act of indemnity for any breach of these penal statutes. By a complete abstinence from all ecclesiastical questions no outlet was left for the bigotry of the people at large, while a suspension of the meetings of Convocation deprived the clergy of their natural centre of agitation and opposition.

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And while the Church thus ceased to be a formidable enemy, the Crown became a friend. Under Anne the throne had regained much of the older influence which it lost through William's unpopularity; but under the two sovereigns who followed Anne the power of the Crown lay absolutely dormant. They were strangers, to whom loyalty in its personal sense was impossible; and their character as nearly approached insignificance as it is possible for human character to approach it. Both were honest and straightforward men, who frankly accepted the irksome position of constitutional kings. But neither had any qualities which could make their honesty attractive to the people at large. The temper of George the First was that of a gentleman usher; and his one care was to get money for his favourites and himself. The temper of George the Second was that of a drill-sergeant, who believed himself master of his realm while he repeated the lessons he had learned from his wife, and which his wife had learned from the Minister. Their Court is familiar enough in the witty memoirs of the time; but as political figures the two Georges are almost absent from our history. William of Orange, while ruling in most home matters by the advice of his Ministers, had not only used the power of rejecting bills passed by the two Houses, but had kept in his own hands the control of foreign affairs. Anne had never yielded even to Marlborough her exclusive right of dealing with Church preferment, and had presided to the last at the Cabinet Councils of her ministers. But with the accession of the Georges these reserves passed away. No sovereign since Anne's death has appeared at a Cabinet Council, or has ventured to refuse his assent to an Act of Parliament. As Elector of Hanover indeed the King still dealt with Continental affairs: but his personal interference roused an increasing jealousy, while it affected in a very slight degree the foreign policy of his English counsellors.

England, in short, was governed not by the King but by

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the Whig Ministers. But their power was doubled by the steady support of the very kings they displaced. The first two sovereigns of the House of Hanover believed they owed their throne to the Whigs, and looked on the support of the Whigs as the true basis of their monarchy. The new monarchs had no longer to dread the spectre of republicanism which had haunted the Stuarts and even Anne, whenever a Whig domination threatened her; for republicanism was dead. Nor was there the older anxiety as to the prerogative to sever the monarchy from the Whigs, for the bounds of the prerogative were now defined by law, and the Whigs were as zealous as any Tory could be in preserving what remained. From the accession of George the First therefore to the death of George the Second the whole influence of the Crown was thrown into the Whig scale; and if its direct power was gone, its indirect influence was still powerful. It was indeed the more powerful that the Revolution had put an end to the dread that its influence could be used in any struggle against liberty. "The generality of the world here," said the new Whig Chancellor, Lord Cowper, to King George, "is so much in love with the advantages a king of Great Britain has to bestow without the least exceeding the bounds of law, that 'tis wholly in your majesty's power, by showing your power in good time to one or other of them, to give which party you please a clear majority in all succeeding parliaments."

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It was no wonder therefore that in the first of the new King's parliaments an overwhelming majority appeared in support of the Whigs. But the continuance of that majority for more than thirty years was not wholly due to the unswerving support which the Crown gave its Ministers or to the secession of the Tories. In some measure it was due to the excellent organization of the Whig party. While their adversaries were divided by differences of principle and without leaders of real eminence, the Whigs stood as one man on the principles of the Revolution and

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produced great leaders who carried them into effect. They submitted with admirable discipline to the guidance of a knot of great nobles, to the houses of Bentinck, Mannors, Campbell, and Cavendish, to the Fitzroys and Lennoxes, the Russells and Grenvilles, families whose resistance to the Stuarts, whose share in the Revolution, whose energy in setting the line of Hanover on the throne, gave them a claim to power. It was due yet more largely to the activity with which the Whigs devoted themselves to the gaining and preserving an ascendancy in the House of Commons. The support of the commercial classes and of the great towns was secured not only by a resolute maintenance of public credit, but by the special attention which each ministry paid to questions of trade and finance. Peace and the reduction of the land-tax conciliated the farmers and the landowners, while the Jacobite sympathies of the bulk of the squires, and their consequent withdrawal from all share in politics, threw even the representation of the shires for a time into Whig hands. Of the county members, who formed the less numerous but the weightier part of the lower House, nine-tenths were for some years relatives and dependents of the great Whig families. Nor were coarser means of controlling Parliament neglected. The wealth of the Whig houses was lavishly spent in securing a monopoly of the small and corrupt constituencies which made up a large part of the borough representation. It was spent yet more unscrupulously in parliamentary bribery. Corruption was older than Walpole or the Whig Ministers, for it sprang out of the very transfer of power to the House of Commons which had begun with the Restoration. The transfer was complete, and the House was supreme in the State; but while freeing itself from the control of the Crown, it was as yet imperfectly responsible to the people. It was only at election time that a member felt the pressure of public opinion. The secrecy of parliamentary proceedings, which had been needful as a safeguard against royal interference with debate, served

CHAP. IV. as a safeguard against interference on the part of constituencies. This strange union of immense power with absolute freedom from responsibility brought about its natural results in the bulk of members. A vote was too valuable to be given without recompense, and parliamentary support had to be bought by places, pensions, and bribes in hard cash.

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But dexterous as was their management, and compact as was their organization, it was to nobler qualities than these that the Whigs owed their long rule over England. Factious and selfish as much of their conduct proved, they were true to their principles, and their principles were those for which England had been struggling through two hundred years. The right to free government, to freedom of conscience, and to freedom of speech, had been declared indeed in the Revolution of 1688. But these rights owe their definite establishment as the recognised basis of national life and national action to the age of the Georges. It was the long and unbroken fidelity to free principles with which the Whig administration was conducted that made constitutional government a part of the very life of Englishmen. It was their government of England year after year on the principles of the Revolution that converted these principles into national habits. Before their long rule was over Englishmen had forgotten that it was possible to persecute for difference of opinion, or to put down the liberty of the press, or to tamper with the administration of justice, or to rule without a Parliament.

Robert
Walpole.

That this policy was so firmly grasped and so steadily carried out was due above all to the genius of Robert Walpole. Walpole was born in 1676; and he had entered Parliament two years before the death of William of Orange as a young Norfolk landowner of fair fortune, with the tastes and air of the class from which he sprang. His big, square figure, his vulgar good-humoured face were those of a common country squire. And in Walpole the

squire underlay the statesman to the last. He was ignorant of books, he "loved neither writing nor reading," and if he had a taste for art, his real love was for the table, the bottle, and the chase. He rode as hard as he drank. Even in moments of political peril, the first despatch he would open was the letter from his gamekeeper. There was the temper of the Norfolk fox-hunter in the "doggedness" which Marlborough noted as his characteristic, in the burly self-confidence which declared "If I had not been Prime Minister I should have been Archbishop of Canterbury," in the stubborn courage which conquered the awkwardness of his earlier efforts to speak or met single-handed at the last the bitter attacks of a host of enemies. There was the same temper in the genial good-humour which became with him a new force in politics. No man was ever more fiercely attacked by speakers and writers, but he brought in no "gagging Act" for the press; and though the lives of most of his assailants were in his hands through their intrigues with the Pretender, he made little use of his power over them.

Where his country breeding showed itself most, however, was in the shrewd, narrow, honest character of his mind. Though he saw very clearly, he could not see far, and he would not believe what he could not see. His prosaic good sense turned sceptically away from the poetic and passionate sides of human feeling. Appeals to the loftier or purer motives of action he laughed at as "school-boy flights." For young members who talked of public virtue or patriotism he had one good-natured answer: "You will soon come off that and grow wiser." But he was thoroughly straightforward and true to his own convictions, so far as they went. "Robin and I are two honest men," the Jacobite Shippen owned in later years, when contrasting him with his factious opponents: "he is for King George and I am for King James, but those men with long cravats only desire place either under King George or King James." What marked him off from his

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His
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Very evidence of
his every man has
his price

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fellow-Whigs however was not so much the clearness with which Walpole saw the value of the political results which the Revolution had won, or the fidelity with which he carried out his "Revolution principles;" it was the sagacity with which he grasped the conditions on which alone England could be brought to a quiet acceptance of both of them. He never hid from himself that, weakened and broken as it was, Toryism lived on in the bulk of the nation as a spirit of sullen opposition, an opposition that could not rise into active revolt so long as the Pretender remained a Catholic, but which fed itself with hopes of a Stuart who would at last befriend English religion and English liberty, and which in the meanwhile lay ready to give force and virulence to any outbreak of strife at home. On a temper such as this argument was wasted. The only agency that could deal with it was the agency of time, the slow wearing away of prejudice, the slow upgrowth of new ideas, the gradual conviction that a Stuart restoration was hopeless, the as gradual recognition of the benefits which had been won by the Revolution, and which were secured by the maintenance of the House of Hanover upon the throne.

The
Townshend
Ministry.

Such a transition would be hindered or delayed by every outbreak of political or religious controversy that changes or reforms, however wise in themselves, must necessarily bring with them; and Walpole held that no reform was as important to the country at large as a national reunion and settlement. Not less keen and steady was his sense of the necessity of external peace. To provoke or to suffer new struggles on the Continent was not only to rouse fresh resentment in a people who still longed to withdraw from all part in foreign wars; it was to give fresh force to the Pretender by forcing France to use him as a tool against England, and to give fresh life to Jacobitism by stirring fresh hopes of the Pretender's return. It was for this reason that Walpole clung steadily to a policy of peace. But it was not at

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once that he could force such a policy either on the Whig party or on the King. Though his vigour in the cause of his party had earned him the bitter hostility of the Tories in the later years of Anne, and a trumped-up charge of peculation had served in 1712 as a pretext for expelling him from the House and committing him to the Tower, at the accession of George the First Walpole was far from holding the commanding position he was soon to assume. The stage indeed was partly cleared for him by the jealousy with which the new sovereign regarded the men who had till now served as chiefs of the Whigs. Though the first Hanoverian Ministry was drawn wholly from the Whig party, its leaders and Marlborough found themselves alike set aside. But even had they regained their old power, time must soon have removed them; for Wharton and Halifax died in 1715, and 1716 saw the death of Somers and the imbecility of Marlborough. The man to whom the King entrusted the direction of affairs was the new Secretary of State, Lord Townshend. His merit with George the First lay in his having negotiated a Barrier Treaty with Holland in 1709 by which the Dutch were secured in the possession of a greater number of fortresses in the Netherlands than they had garrisoned before the war, on condition of their guaranteeing the succession of the House of Hanover. The King had always looked on this treaty as the great support of his cause, and on its negotiation as representing that union of Holland, Hanover, and the Whigs, to which he owed his throne. Townshend's fellow Secretary was General Stanhope, who had won fame both as a soldier and a politician, and who was now raised to the peerage. It was as Townshend's brother-in-law, rather than from a sense of his actual ability, that Walpole successively occupied the posts of Paymaster of the Forces, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and First Lord of the Treasury, in the new administration.

The first work of the new Ministry was to meet a desperate attempt of the Pretender to gain the throne.

The
rising of
1715.

CHAP. IV. There was no real hope of success, for the active Jacobites in England were few, and the Tories were broken and dispirited by the fall of their leaders. The policy of Bolingbroke, as Secretary of State to the Pretender, was to defer action till he had secured help from Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, and had induced Lewis the Fourteenth to lend a few thousand men to aid a Jacobite rising. But at the moment of action the death of Lewis ruined all hope of aid from France; the hope of Swedish aid proved as fruitless; and in spite of Bolingbroke's counsels James Stuart resolved to act alone. Without informing his new Minister, he ordered the Earl of Mar to give the signal for revolt in the North. In Scotland the triumph of the Whigs meant the continuance of the House of Argyll in power; and the rival Highland clans were as ready to fight the Campbells under Mar as they had been ready to fight them under Dundee or Montrose. But Mar was a leader of a different stamp from these. In September, 1715, six thousand Highlanders joined him at Perth, but his cowardice or want of conduct kept this army idle till the Duke of Argyll had gathered forces to meet it in an indecisive engagement at Sheriffmuir. The Pretender, who arrived too late for the action, proved a yet more sluggish and incapable leader than Mar: and at the close of the year an advance of six thousand men under General Carpenter drove James over-sea again and dispersed the clans to their hills. In England the danger passed away like a dream. The accession of the new King had been followed by some outbreaks of riotous discontent; but at the talk of Highland risings and French invasions Tories and Whigs alike rallied round the throne; while the army, which had bitterly resented the interruption of its victories by the treachery of St. John, and hailed with delight the restoration of Marlborough to its command, went hotly for King George. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and the arrest of their leader, Sir William Wyndham, cowed

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the Jacobites; and not a man stirred in the west when Ormond appeared off the coast of Devon and called on his party to rise. Oxford alone, where the University was a hotbed of Jacobitism, showed itself restless; and a few of the Catholic gentry rose in Northumberland, under Lord Derwentwater and Mr. Forster. The arrival of two thousand Highlanders who had been sent to join them by Mar spurred these insurgents to march into Lancashire, where the Catholic party was strongest; but they were soon cooped up in Preston, and driven to a surrender.

The Ministry availed itself of their triumph to gratify the Nonconformists by a repeal of the Schism and Occasional Conformity Acts, and to venture on a great constitutional change. Under the Triennial Bill in William's reign the duration of a Parliament was limited to three years. Now that the House of Commons however was become the ruling power in the State, a change was absolutely required to secure steadiness and fixity of political action; and in 1716 this necessity coincided with the desire of the Whigs to maintain in power a thoroughly Whig Parliament. The duration of Parliament was therefore extended to seven years by the Septennial Bill. But while the Jacobite rising produced these important changes at home, it brought about a yet more momentous change in English policy abroad. The foresight of William the Third in his attempt to secure European peace by an alliance of the three Western powers, France, Holland, and England, was justified by the realization of his policy under George the First. The new triple alliance was brought about by the practical advantages which it directly offered to the rulers in both England and France, as well as by the actual position of European politics. The landing of James in Scotland had quickened the anxiety of King George for his removal to a more distant refuge than Lorraine, and for the entire detachment of France from his cause. In France on the other hand a political revolution had been caused by the death of Lewis the Fourteenth, which took place in September, 1715, at

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and
France.

CHAP. IV. the very hour of the Jacobite outbreak. From that moment the country had been ruled by the Duke of Orleans as Regent for the young King Lewis the Fifteenth. The boy's health was weak; and the Duke stood next to him in the succession to the crown, if Philip of Spain observed the renunciation of his rights which he had made in the Treaty of Utrecht. It was well known however that Philip had no notion of observing this renunciation, and that he was already intriguing with a strong party in France against the hopes as well as the actual power of the Duke. Nor was Spain more inclined to adhere to its own renunciations in the Treaty than its King. The constant dream of every Spaniard was to recover all that Spain had given up, to win back her Italian dependencies, to win back Gibraltar where the English flag waved upon Spanish soil, to win back, above all, that monopoly of commerce with her dominions in America which England was now entitled to break in upon by the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht.

*Their
alliance
against
Spain.*

To attempt such a recovery was to defy Europe; for if the Treaty had stripped Spain of its fairest dependencies, it had enriched almost every European state with its spoils. Savoy had gained Sicily; the Emperor held the Netherlands, with Naples and the Milanese; Holland looked on the Barrier fortresses as vital to its own security; England, if as yet indifferent to the value of Gibraltar, clung tenaciously to the American Trade. But the boldness of Cardinal Alberoni, who was now the Spanish Minister, accepted the risk; and while his master was intriguing against the Regent in France, Alberoni promised aid to the Jacobite cause as a means of preventing the interference of England with his designs. In spite of failure in both countries he resolved boldly on an attempt to recover the Italian provinces which Philip had lost. He selected the Duke of Savoy as the weakest of his opponents; and armaments greater than Spain had seen for a century put to sea in 1717, and reduced the island of Sardinia.

The blow however was hardly needed to draw England and France together. The Abbé Dubois, a confidant of the Regent, had already met the English King with his Secretary, Lord Stanhope, at the Hague; and entered into a compact, by which France guaranteed the Hanoverian line in England, and England the succession of the house of Orleans should Lewis the Fifteenth die without heirs. The two powers were joined, though unwillingly, by Holland in an alliance, which was concluded on the basis of this compact; and, as in William's time, the existence of this alliance told on the whole aspect of European politics. Though in the summer of 1718 a strong Spanish force landed in Sicily, and made itself master of the island, the appearance of an English squadron in the Straits of Messina was followed by an engagement in which the Spanish fleet was all but destroyed. Alberoni strove to avenge the blow by fitting out an armament of five thousand men, which the Duke of Ormond was to command, for a revival of the Jacobite rising in Scotland. But the ships were wrecked in the Bay of Biscay; and the accession of Austria with Savoy to the Triple Alliance, with the death of the King of Sweden, left Spain alone in the face of Europe. The progress of the French armies in the north of Spain forced Philip at last to give way. Alberoni was dismissed; and the Spanish forces were withdrawn from Sardinia and Sicily. The last of these islands now passed to the Emperor, Savoy being compensated for its loss by the acquisition of Sardinia, from which its Duke took the title of King; while the work of the Treaty of Utrecht was completed by the Emperor's renunciation of his claims on the crown of Spain, and Philip's renunciation of his claims on the Milanese and the two Sicilies.

Successful as the Ministry had been in its work of peace, the struggle had disclosed the difficulties which the double position of its new sovereign were to bring upon England. George was not only King of England; he was Elector of Hanover; and in his own mind he cared far more for the

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of
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CHAP. IV. interests of his Electorate than for the interests of his kingdom. His first aim was to use the power of his new monarchy to strengthen his position in North Germany. At this moment that position was mainly threatened by the hostility of the King of Sweden. Denmark had taken advantage of the defeat and absence of Charles the Twelfth to annex Bremen and Verden with Schleswig and Holstein to its dominions; but in its dread of the Swedish King's return it secured the help of Hanover by ceding the first two towns to the Electorate on a promise of alliance in the war against him. The despatch of a British fleet into the Baltic with the purpose of overawing Sweden identified England with the policy of Hanover; and Charles, who from the moment of his return bent his whole energies to regain what he had lost, retorted by joining in the schemes of Alberoni, and by concluding an alliance with the Russian Czar, Peter the Great, who for other reasons was hostile to the court of Hanover, for a restoration of the Stuarts. Luckily for the new dynasty his plans were brought to an end at the close of 1718 by his death at the siege of Frederickshall; but the policy which provoked them had already brought about the dissolution of the Whig Ministry. When George pressed on his cabinet a treaty of alliance by which England shielded Hanover and its acquisitions from any efforts of the Swedish King, Townshend and Walpole gave a reluctant assent to a measure which they regarded as sacrificing English interests to that of the Electorate, and as entangling the country yet more in the affairs of the continent. For the moment indeed they yielded to the fact that Bremen and Verden were not only of the highest importance to Hanover, which was brought by them in contact with the sea, but of hardly less value to England itself, as they placed the mouths of the Elbe and the Weser, the chief inlets for British commerce into Germany, in the hands of a friendly state. But they refused to take any further steps in carrying out a Hanoverian policy; and

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they successfully withstood an attempt of the King to involve England in a war with the Czar, when Russian troops entered Mecklenburg. The resentment of George the First was seconded by intrigues among their fellow-ministers; and in 1717 Townshend and Walpole were forced to resign their posts.

The want of their good sense soon made itself felt. In the reconstituted cabinet Lords Sunderland and Stanhope remained supreme; and their first aim was to secure the maintenance of the Whig power by a constitutional change. Firm as was the hold of the Whigs over the Commons, it might be shaken by a revulsion of popular feeling, it might be ruined as it was destined to be ruined afterwards by a change in the temper of the King. Sunderland sought a permanence of public policy which neither popular nor royal government could give in the changelessness of a fixed aristocracy with its centre in the Lords. Harley's creation of twelve peers to ensure the sanction of the Lords to the Treaty of Utrecht showed that the Crown possessed a power of swamping the majority and changing the balance of opinion in the House of Peers. In 1720 therefore the Ministry introduced a bill, suggested as was believed by Lord Sunderland, which professed to secure the liberty of the Upper House by limiting the power of the Crown in the creation of fresh Peers. The number of Peers was permanently fixed at the number then sitting in the House; and creations could only be made when vacancies occurred. Twenty-five hereditary Scotch Peers were substituted for the sixteen elected Peers for Scotland. The bill however was strenuously opposed by Robert Walpole. Not only was it a measure which broke the political quiet which he looked on as a necessity for the new government, but it jarred on his good sense as a statesman. It would in fact have rendered representative government impossible. For representative government was now coming day by day more completely to mean government by the

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South Sea
Bubble.

will of the House of Commons, carried out by a Ministry which served as the mouthpiece of that will. But it was only through the prerogative of the Crown, as exercised under the advice of such a Ministry, that the Peers could be forced to bow to the will of the Lower House in matters where their opinion was adverse to that of the Commons; and the proposal of Sunderland would have brought legislation and government to a dead lock.

It was to Walpole's opposition that the Peerage Bill owed its defeat; and this success forced his rivals again to admit him, with Townshend, to a share in the Ministry, though they occupied subordinate offices. But this arrangement was soon to yield to a more natural one. The sudden increase of English commerce begot at this moment the mania of speculation. Ever since the age of Elizabeth the unknown wealth of Spanish America had acted like a spell upon the imagination of Englishmen, and Harley gave countenance to a South Sea Company, which promised a reduction of the public debt as the price of a monopoly of the Spanish trade. Spain however clung jealously to her old prohibitions of all foreign commerce; and the Treaty of Utrecht only won for England the right of engaging in the negro slave-trade with its dominions and of despatching a single ship to the coast of Spanish America. But in spite of all this, the Company again came forward, offering in exchange for new privileges to pay off national burdens which amounted to nearly a million a year. It was in vain that Walpole warned the Ministry and the country against this "dream." Both went mad; and in 1720 bubble Company followed bubble Company, till the inevitable reaction brought a general ruin in its train. The crash brought Stanhope to the grave. Of his colleagues, many were found to have received bribes from the South Sea Company to back its frauds. Craggs, the Secretary of State, died of terror at the investigation; Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was sent to the Tower; and in the general wreck of his

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rivals Robert Walpole mounted again into power. In 1721 he became First Lord of the Treasury, while his brother-in-law, Lord Townshend, returned to his post of Secretary of State. But their relative position was now reversed. Townshend had been the head in their earlier administration: in this Walpole was resolved, to use his own characteristic phrase, that "the firm should be Walpole and Townshend and not Townshend and Walpole."

But it was no mere chance or good luck which maintained Walpole at the head of affairs for more than twenty years. If no Minister has fared worse at the hand of poets or historians, there are few whose greatness has been more impartially recognized by practical statesmen. His qualities indeed were such as a practical statesman can alone do full justice to. There is nothing to charm in the outer aspect of the man; nor is there anything picturesque in the work which he set himself to do, or in the means by which he succeeded in doing it. But picturesque or no, the work of keeping England quiet, and of giving quiet to Europe, was in itself a noble one; and it is the temper with which he carried on this work, the sagacity with which he discerned the means by which alone it could be done, and the stubborn, indomitable will with which he faced every difficulty in the doing it, which gives Walpole his place among English statesmen. He was the first and he was the most successful of our Peace Ministers. "The most pernicious circumstances," he said, "in which this country can be are those of war; as we must be losers while it lasts, and cannot be great gainers when it ends." It was not that the honour or influence of England suffered in Walpole's hands, for he won victories by the firmness of his policy and the skill of his negotiations as effectual as any that are won by arms. But up to the very end of his Ministry, when the frenzy of the nation at last forced his hand, in spite of every varying complication of foreign affairs and a never-ceasing pressure alike from the Opposition and the Court, it is the glory

Here in some
philosophical
speculations

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of Walpole that he resolutely kept England at peace. And as he was the first of our Peace Ministers, so he was the first of our Financiers. He was far indeed from discerning the powers which later statesmen have shown to exist in a sound finance, powers of producing both national developement and international amity; but he had the sense to see, what no minister till then had seen, that the only help a statesman can give to industry or commerce is to remove all obstacles in the way of their natural growth, and that beyond this the best course he can take in presence of a great increase in national energy and national wealth is to look quietly on and to let it alone. At the outset of his rule he declared in a speech from the Throne that nothing would more conduce to the extension of commerce "than to make the exportation of our own manufactures, and the importation of the commodities used in the manufacturing of them, as practicable and easy as may be."

Walpole's
finance.

The first act of his financial administration was to take off the duties from more than a hundred British exports, and nearly forty articles of importation. In 1730 he broke in the same enlightened spirit through the prejudice which restricted the commerce of the Colonies to the mother-country alone, by allowing Georgia and the Carolinas to export their rice directly to any part of Europe. The result was that the rice of America soon drove that of Italy and Egypt from the market. His Excise Bill, defective as it was, was the first measure in which an English Minister showed any real grasp of the principles of taxation. The wisdom of Walpole was rewarded by a quick up-growth of prosperity. The material progress of the country was such as England had never seen before. Our exports, which were only six millions in value at the beginning of the century, had reached the value of twelve millions by the middle of it. It was above all the trade with the Colonies which began to give England a new wealth. The whole Colonial trade at the time of the Battle of Blenheim was no greater than the trade with

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the single isle of Jamaica at the opening of the American war. At the accession of George the Second the exports to Pennsylvania were valued at £15,000. At his death they reached half a million. In the middle of the eighteenth century the profits of Great Britain from the trade with the Colonies were estimated at two millions a year. And with the growth of wealth came a quick growth in population. That of Manchester and Birmingham, whose manufactures were now becoming of importance, doubled in thirty years. Bristol, the chief seat of the West Indian trade, rose into new prosperity. Liverpool, which owes its creation to the new trade with the West, sprang up from a little country town into the third port in the kingdom. With peace and security, and the wealth that they brought with them, the value of land, and with it the rental of every country gentleman rose fast. "Estates which were rented at two thousand a year threescore years ago," said Burke in 1766, "are at three thousand at present."

Nothing shows more clearly the soundness of his political intellect than the fact that this up-growth of wealth around him never made Walpole swerve from a rigid economy, from a steady reduction of the debt, or a diminution of fiscal duties. Even before the death of George the First the public burdens were reduced by twenty millions. It was indeed in economy alone that his best work could be done. In finance as in other fields of statesmanship Walpole was forbidden from taking more than tentative steps towards a wiser system by the needs of the work he had specially to do. To this work everything gave way. He withdrew his Excise Bill rather than suffer the agitation it roused to break the quiet which was reconciling the country to the system of the Revolution. His hatred of religious intolerance or the support he hoped for from the Dissenters never swayed him to rouse the spirit of popular bigotry, which he knew to be ready to burst out at the slightest challenge, by any effort to repeal the laws against

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of
inaction.

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CHAP. IV. Nonconformity. His temper was naturally vigorous and active; and yet the years of his power are years without parallel in our annals for political stagnation. His long administration indeed is almost without a history. All legislative and political action seemed to cease with his entry into office. Year after year passed by without a change. In the third year of Walpole's ministry there was but one division in the House of Commons. Such an inaction gives little scope for the historian; but it fell in with the temper of the nation at large. It was popular with the class which commonly presses for political activity. The energy of the trading class was absorbed for the time in the rapid extension of commerce and accumulation of wealth. So long as the country was justly and temperately governed the merchant and shopkeeper were content to leave government in the hands that held it. All they asked was to be let alone to enjoy their new freedom and develop their new industries. And Walpole let them alone. On the other hand, the forces which opposed the Revolution lost year by year somewhat of their energy. The fervour which breeds revolt died down among the Jacobites as their swords rusted idly in their scabbards. The Tories sulked in their country houses; but their wrath against the House of Hanover ebbed away for want of opportunities of exerting itself. And meanwhile on opponents as on friends the freedom which the Revolution had brought with it was doing its work. It was to the patient influence of this freedom that Walpole trusted; and it was the special mark of his administration that in spite of every temptation he gave it full play. Though he dared not touch the laws that oppressed the Catholic or the Dissenter, he took care that they should remain inoperative. Catholic worship went on unhindered. Yearly bills of indemnity exempted the Nonconformists from the consequences of their infringement of the Test Act. There was no tampering with public justice or with personal liberty. Thought and action were alike left free. No

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*And Walpole
could do
nothing*

Minister was ever more foully slandered by journalists and pamphleteers; but Walpole never meddled with the press.

Abroad as well as at home the difficulties in the way of his policy were enormous. Peace was still hard to maintain. Defeated as her first attempt had been, Spain remained resolute to regain her lost provinces, to recover Gibraltar and Minorca, and to restore her old monopoly of trade with her American colonies. She had learned that she could do this only by breaking the alliance of the Four Powers, which left her isolated in Europe; and she saw at last a chance of breaking this league in the difficulties of the House of Austria. The Emperor Charles the Sixth was without a son. He had issued a Pragmatic Sanction by which he provided that his hereditary dominions should descend unbroken to his daughter, Maria Theresa, but no European state had as yet consented to guarantee her succession. Spain seized on this opportunity of detaching the Emperor from the Western powers. She promised to support the Pragmatic Sanction in return for a pledge on the part of Charles to aid in wresting Gibraltar and Minorca from England, and in securing to a Spanish prince the succession to Parma, Piacenza, and Tuscany. A grant of the highest trading privileges in her American dominions to a commercial company which the Emperor had established at Ostend, in defiance of the Treaty of Westphalia and the remonstrances of England and Holland, revealed this secret alliance; and there were fears of the adhesion of Russia, which still remained hostile to England through the quarrel with Hanover. The danger was met for a while by an alliance of England, France, and Prussia, in 1725; but the withdrawal of the last Power again gave courage to the confederates, and in 1727 the Spaniards besieged Gibraltar while Charles threatened an invasion of Holland. The moderation of Walpole alone averted a European war. While sending British squadrons to the Baltic, the Spanish coast, and America, he succeeded by diplomatic pressure in again forcing the Emperor to

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*Fresh
efforts of
Spain.*

CHAP. IV. inaction; after weary negotiations Spain was brought in
 The House of Hanover. 1714-1760. 1729 to sign the Treaty of Seville and to content herself
 with the promise of a succession of a Spanish prince to
 the Duchies of Parma and Tuscany; and the discontent
 of Charles the Sixth at this concession was allayed in
 1731 by giving the guarantee of England to the Pragmatic
 Sanction.

George the Second. The patience and even temper which Walpole showed in
 this business was the more remarkable that in the course of
 it his power received what seemed a fatal shock from the
 death of the King. George the First died on a journey to
 Hanover in 1727; and his successor, George the Second,
 was known to have hated his father's Minister hardly less
 than he had hated his father. But hate Walpole as he
 might, the new King was absolutely guided by the adroit-
 ness of his wife, Caroline of Anspach; and Caroline had
 resolved that there should be no change in the Ministry.
 After a few days of withdrawal therefore Walpole again
 returned to office; and the years which followed were
 those in which his power reached its height. He gained
 as great an influence over George the Second as he had
 gained over his father: and in spite of the steady increase
 of his opponents in the House of Commons, his hold
 over it remained unshaken. The country was tranquil and
 prosperous. The prejudices of the landed gentry were
 met by a steady effort to reduce the land-tax, whose pres-
 sure was half the secret of their hostility to the Revolution
 that produced it. The Church was quiet. The Jacobites
 were too hopeless to stir. A few trade measures and social
 reforms crept quietly through the Houses. An enquiry
 into the state of the gaols showed that social thought was
 not utterly dead. A bill of great value enacted that all
 proceedings in courts of justice should henceforth be in
 the English tongue.

Excise Bill. Only once did Walpole break this tranquillity by an
 attempt at a great measure of statesmanship; and the result
 of his attempt proved how wise was the inactivity of his

CHAP. IV. general policy. No tax had from the first moment of its
 The House of Hanover. 1714-1760. introduction been more unpopular than the Excise. Its
 origin was due to Pym and the Long Parliament, who
 imposed duties on beer, cyder, and perry, which at the
 Restoration produced an annual income of more than six
 hundred thousand pounds. The war with France at the
 Revolution brought with it the imposition of a malt-tax
 and additional duties on spirits, wine, tobacco, and other
 articles. So great had been the increase in the public
 wealth that the return from the Excise amounted at the
 death of George the First to nearly two millions and a
 half a year. But its unpopularity remained unabated, and
 even philosophers like Locke contended that the whole
 public revenue should be drawn from direct taxes upon
 the land. Walpole, on the other hand, saw in the growth
 of indirect taxation a means of winning over the country
 gentry to the new dynasty of the Revolution by freeing
 the land from all burdens whatever. He saw too a means
 of diminishing the loss suffered by the revenue from
 the Customs through smuggling and fraud. These losses
 were immense; that on tobacco alone amounted to a
 third of the whole duty. In 1733 therefore he introduced
 an Excise Bill, which met this evil by the establishment
 of bonded warehouses, and by the collection of the duties
 from the inland dealers in the form of Excise and not
 of Customs. The first measure would have made
 London a free port, and doubled English trade. The
 second would have so largely increased the revenue,
 without any loss to the consumer, as to enable Walpole to
 repeal the land-tax. In the case of tea and coffee alone,
 the change in the mode of levying the duty was estimated
 to bring in an additional hundred thousand pounds a year.
 The necessities of life and the raw materials of manu-
 facture were in Walpole's plan to remain absolutely un-
 taxed. The scheme was in effect an anticipation of the
 principles which have guided English finance since the
 triumph of free trade, and every part of it has now been

CHAP. IV. carried into effect. But in 1733 Walpole stood ahead of
 The House of Hanover. his time. The violence of his opponents was backed by
 1714-1760. an outburst of popular prejudice; riots almost grew into
 revolt; and in spite of the Queen's wish to put down
 resistance by force, Walpole withdrew the bill. "I will
 not be the Minister," he said with noble self-command, "to
 enforce taxes at the expense of blood."

The
 Patriots.

What had fanned popular prejudice into a flame during
 the uproar over the Excise Bill was the violence of the so-
 called "Patriots." In the absence of a strong opposition
 and of great impulses to enthusiasm a party breaks readily
 into factions; and the weakness of the Tories joined with
 the stagnation of public affairs to breed faction among the
 Whigs. Walpole too was jealous of power; and as his
 jealousy drove colleague after colleague out of office they
 became leaders of a party whose sole aim was to thrust him
 from his post. Greed of power indeed was the one passion
 which mastered his robust common-sense. Townshend
 was turned out of office in 1730, Lord Chesterfield in 1733;
 and though he started with the ablest administration the
 country had known, Walpole was left after twenty years
 of supremacy with but one man of ability in his cabinet,
 the Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke. With the single exception
 of Townshend, the colleagues whom his jealousy dismissed
 plunged into an opposition more factious and unprincipled
 than has ever disgraced English politics. The "Patriots,"
 as they called themselves, owned Pulteney, a brilliant
 speaker and unscrupulous intriguer, as their head; they
 were reinforced by a band of younger Whigs—the "Boys,"
 as Walpole named them—whose temper revolted alike
 against the inaction and cynicism of his policy, and whose
 fiery spokesman was a young cornet of horse, William Pitt;
 and they rallied to these the fragment of the Tory party
 which still took part in politics, a fragment inconsiderable
 in numbers but of far greater weight as representing a large
 part of the nation, and which was guided for a while by
 the virulent ability of Bolingbroke, whom Walpole had

suffered to return from exile, but to whom he had refused
 the restoration of his seat in the House of Lords. Inside
 Parliament indeed the invectives of the "Patriots" fell
 dead before Walpole's majorities and his good-humoured
 contempt; so far were their attacks from shaking his
 power that Bolingbroke abandoned the struggle in despair
 to return again into exile, while Pulteney with his party
 could only take refuge in a silly secession from Parliament.
 But on the nation at large their speeches and pamphlets,
 with the brilliant sarcasms of their literary allies, such as
 Pope or Johnson, did more effective work. Unjust indeed as
 their outcry was, the growing response to it told that the
 political inactivity of the country was drawing to an end.
 It was the very success of Walpole's policy which was to
 bring about his downfall; for it was the gradual closing of
 the chasm which had all but broken England into two
 warring peoples that allowed the political energy of the
 country to return to its natural channels and to give a new
 vehemence to political strife. Vague too and hollow as
 much of the "high talk" of the Patriots was, it showed
 that the age of political cynicism, of that unbelief in high
 sentiment and noble aspirations which had followed on
 the crash of Puritanism, was drawing to an end. Rant
 about ministerial corruption would have fallen flat on the
 public ear had not new moral forces, a new sense of social
 virtue, a new sense of religion been stirring, however
 blindly, in the minds of Englishmen.

The stir showed itself markedly in a religious revival
 which dates from the later years of Walpole's ministry;
 and which began in a small knot of Oxford students, whose
 revolt against the religious deadness of their times expressed
 itself in ascetic observances, an enthusiastic devotion, and
 a methodical regularity of life which gained them the
 nickname of "Methodists." Three figures detached them-
 selves from the group as soon as, on its transfer to London
 in 1738, it attracted public attention by the fervour and
 even extravagance of its piety; and each found his special

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Goal for ambition

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work in the task to which the instinct of the new movement led it from the first, that of carrying religion and morality to the vast masses of population which lay concentrated in the towns or around the mines and collieries of Cornwall and the north. Whitfield, a servitor of Pembroke College, was above all the preacher of the revival. Speech was governing English politics; and the religious power of speech was shown when a dread of "enthusiasm" closed against the new apostles the pulpits of the Established Church, and forced them to preach in the fields. Their voice was soon heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land, among the bleak moors of Northumberland, or in the dens of London, or in the long galleries where in the pauses of his labour the Cornish miner listens to the sobbing of the sea. Whitfield's preaching was such as England had never heard before, theatrical, extravagant, often commonplace, but hushing all criticism by its intense reality, its earnestness of belief, its deep tremulous sympathy with the sin and sorrow of mankind. It was no common enthusiast who could wring gold from the close-fisted Franklin and admiration from the fastidious Horace Walpole, or who could look down from the top of a green knoll at Kingswood on twenty thousand colliers, grimy from the Bristol coal-pits, and see as he preached the tears "making white channels down their blackened cheeks."

The
religious
revival.

On the rough and ignorant masses to whom they spoke the effect of Whitfield and his fellow Methodists was mighty both for good and ill. Their preaching stirred a passionate hatred in their opponents. Their lives were often in danger, they were mobbed, they were ducked, they were stoned, they were smothered with filth. But the enthusiasm they aroused was equally passionate. Women fell down in convulsions; strong men were smitten suddenly to the earth; the preacher was interrupted by bursts of hysteric laughter or of hysteric sobbing. All the phenomena of strong spiritual excitement, so familiar now,

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but at that time strange and unknown, followed on their sermons; and the terrible sense of a conviction of sin, a new dread of hell, a new hope of heaven, took forms at once grotesque and sublime. Charles Wesley, a Christ Church student, came to add sweetness to this sudden and startling light. He was the "sweet singer" of the movement. His hymns expressed the fiery conviction of its converts in lines so chaste and beautiful that its more extravagant features disappeared. The wild throes of hysteric enthusiasm passed into a passion for hymn-singing, and a new musical impulse was aroused in the people which gradually changed the face of public devotion throughout England.

But it was his elder brother, John Wesley, who embodied in himself not this or that side of the new movement, but the movement itself. Even at Oxford, where he resided as a fellow of Lincoln, he had been looked upon as head of the group of Methodists, and after his return from a quixotic mission to the Indians of Georgia he again took the lead of the little society, which had removed in the interval to London. In power as a preacher he stood next to Whitfield; as a hymn-writer he stood second to his brother Charles. But while combining in some degree the excellences of either, he possessed qualities in which both were utterly deficient; an indefatigable industry, a cool judgement, a command over others, a faculty of organization, a singular union of patience and moderation with an imperious ambition, which marked him as a ruler of men. He had besides a learning and skill in writing which no other of the Methodists possessed; he was older than any of his colleagues at the start of the movement, and he outlived them all. His life indeed almost covers the century. He was born in 1703 and lived on till 1791, and the Methodist body had passed through every phase of its history before he sank into the grave at the age of eighty-eight. It would have been impossible for Wesley to have wielded

John
Wesley.

CHAP. IV. the power he did had he not shared the follies and extravagance as well as the enthusiasm of his disciples. Throughout his life his asceticism was that of a monk. At times he lived on bread only, and he often slept on the bare boards. He lived in a world of wonders and divine interpositions. It was a miracle if the rain stopped and allowed him to set forward on a journey. It was a judgement of heaven if a hailstorm burst over a town which had been deaf to his preaching. One day, he tells us, when he was tired and his horse fell lame, "I thought cannot God heal either man or beast by any means or without any?—immediately my headache ceased and my horse's lameness in the same instant." With a still more childish fanaticism he guided his conduct, whether in ordinary events or in the great crises of his life by drawing lots or watching the particular texts at which his Bible opened.

*His
organiza-
tion of
Methodism.*

But with all this extravagance and superstition Wesley's mind was essentially practical, orderly, and conservative. No man ever stood at the head of a great revolution whose temper was so anti-revolutionary. In his earlier days the bishops had been forced to rebuke him for the narrowness and intolerance of his churchmanship. When Whitfield began his sermons in the fields, Wesley "could not at first reconcile himself to that strange way." He condemned and fought against the admission of laymen as preachers till he found himself left with none but laymen to preach. To the last he clung passionately to the Church of England, and looked on the body he had formed as but a lay society in full communion with it. He broke with the Moravians, who had been the earliest friends of the new movement, when they endangered its safe conduct by their contempt of religious forms. He broke with Whitfield when the great preacher plunged into an extravagant Calvinism. But the same practical temper of mind which led him to reject what was unmeasured, and to be the last to adopt what was new, enabled him at once to grasp and organize

the novelties he adopted. He became himself the most unwearied of field preachers, and his journal for half a century is little more than a record of fresh journeys and fresh sermons. When once driven to employ lay helpers in his ministry he made their work a new and attractive feature in his system. His earlier asceticism only lingered in a dread of social enjoyments and an aversion from the gayer and sunnier side of life which links the Methodist movement with that of the Puritans. As the fervour of his superstition died down into the calm of age, his cool common sense discouraged in his followers the enthusiastic outbursts which marked the opening of the revival. His powers were bent to the building up of a great religious society which might give to the new enthusiasm a lasting and practical form. The Methodists were grouped into classes, gathered in love-feasts, purified by the expulsion of unworthy members, and furnished with an alternation of settled ministers and wandering preachers; while the whole body was placed under the absolute government of a Conference of ministers. But so long as he lived, the direction of the new religious society remained with Wesley alone. "If by arbitrary power," he replied, with charming simplicity to objectors, "you mean a power which I exercise simply without any colleagues therein, this is certainly true, but I see no hurt in it."

The great body which he thus founded numbered a hundred thousand members at his death, and now counts its members in England and America by millions. But the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the "Evangelical" movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole's day the English clergy were the idlest and the most lifeless in the world. In our own day no body of religious ministers surpasses them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in

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popular regard. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm, which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education.

*Revival of
France.*

From the new England which was springing up about him, from that new stir of national life and emotion of which the Wesleyan revival was but a part, Walpole stood utterly aloof. National enthusiasm, national passion, found no echo in his cool and passionless good sense. The growing consciousness in the people at large of a new greatness, its instinctive prevision of the coming of a time when England was to play a foremost part in the history of the world, the upgrowth of a nobler and loftier temper which should correspond to such a destiny, all were alike unintelligible to him. In the talk of patriotism and public virtue he saw mere rant and extravagance. "Men would grow wiser," he said, "and come out of that." The revival of English religion he looked on with an indifference lightly dashed with dread as a reawakening of fanaticism which might throw new obstacles in the way of religious liberty. In the face of the growing excitement therefore he clung as doggedly as ever to his policy of quiet at home and peace abroad. But peace was now threatened by a foe far more formidable than Spain. What had hitherto enabled England to uphold the settlement of Europe as established at the Peace of Utrecht was above all the alliance and backing of France. But it was clear that such an alliance could hardly be a permanent one. The Treaty of Utrecht had been a humiliation for France even more than for Spain. It had marked the failure of those dreams of European supremacy which the House of Bourbon had nursed ever since the close of the sixteenth

century, and which Lewis the Fourteenth had all but turned from dreams into realities. Beaten and impoverished, France had bowed to the need of peace; but her strange powers of recovery had shown themselves in the years of tranquillity that peace secured; and with reviving wealth and the upgrowth of a new generation which had known nothing of the woes that followed Blenheim and Ramillies the old ambition started again into life.

It was fired to action by a new rivalry. The naval supremacy of Britain was growing into an empire of the sea; and not only was such an empire in itself a challenge to France, but it was fatal to the aspirations after a colonial dominion, after aggrandizement in America, and the upbuilding of a French power in the East, which were already vaguely stirring in the breasts of her statesmen. And to this new rivalry was added the temptation of a new chance of success. On the Continent the mightiest foe of France had ever been the House of Austria; but that House was now paralyzed by a question of succession. It was almost certain that the quarrels which must follow the death of the Emperor would break the strength of Germany, and it was probable that they might be so managed as to destroy for ever that of the House of Hapsburg. While the main obstacle to her ambition was thus weakened or removed, France won a new and invaluable aid to it in the friendship of Spain. Accident had hindered for a while the realization of the forebodings which led Marlborough and Somers so fiercely to oppose a recognition of the union of the two countries under the same royal house in the Peace of Utrecht. The age and death of Lewis the Fourteenth, the minority of his successor, the hostility between Philip of Spain and the Duke of Orleans, the personal quarrel between the two Crowns which broke out after the Duke's death, had long held the Bourbon powers apart. France had in fact been thrown on the alliance of England, and had been forced to play a

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*Its union
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CHAP. IV. chief part in opposing Spain and in maintaining the European settlement. But at the death of George the First this temporary severance was already passing away. The birth of children to Lewis the Fifteenth settled all questions of succession; and no obstacle remained to hinder their family sympathies from uniting the Bourbon Courts in a common action. The boast of Lewis the Fourteenth was at last fulfilled. In the mighty struggle for supremacy which France carried on from the fall of Walpole to the Peace of Paris her strength was doubled by the fact that there were "no Pyrenees."

The
Family
Compact.

The first signs of this new danger showed themselves in 1733, when the peace of Europe was broken afresh by disputes which rose out of a contested election to the throne of Poland. Austria and France were alike drawn into the strife; and in England the awakening jealousy of French designs roused a new pressure for war. The new King too was eager to fight, and her German sympathies inclined even Caroline to join in the fray. But Walpole stood firm for the observance of neutrality. He worked hard to avert and to narrow the war; but he denied that British interests were so involved in it as to call on England to take a part. "There are fifty thousand men slain this year in Europe," he boasted as the strife went on, "and not one Englishman." Meanwhile he laboured to bring the quarrel to a close; and in 1736 the intervention of England and Holland succeeded in restoring peace. But the country had watched with a jealous dread the military energy that proclaimed the revival of the French arms; and it noted bitterly that peace was bought by the triumph of both branches of the House of Bourbon. A new Bourbon monarchy was established at the cost of the House of Austria by the cession of the Two Sicilies to a Spanish Prince in exchange for his right of succession to the Duchies of Parma and Tuscany. On the other hand, Lorraine, so long courted by French ambition, passed finally into the hands of France. The political instinct of the

nation at once discerned in these provisions a union of the Bourbon powers; and its dread of such a union proved to be a just one. As early as the outbreak of the war a Family Compact had been secretly concluded between France and Spain, the main object of which was the ruin of the maritime supremacy of Britain. Spain bound herself to deprive England gradually of its commercial privileges in her American dominions, and to transfer them to France. France in return engaged to support Spain at sea, and to aid her in the recovery of Gibraltar.

The caution with which Walpole held aloof from the Polish war rendered this compact inoperative for the time; but neither of the Bourbon courts ceased to look forward to its future execution. The peace of 1736 was indeed a mere pause in the struggle which their union made inevitable. No sooner was the war ended than France strained every nerve to increase her fleet; while Spain steadily tightened the restrictions on British commerce with her American colonies. It was the dim, feverish sense of the drift of these efforts that embittered every hour the struggle of English traders with the Spaniards in the southern seas. The trade with Spanish America, which, illegal as it was, had grown largely through the connivance of Spanish post-officers during the long alliance of England and Spain in the wars against France, had at last received a legal recognition in the Peace of Utrecht. But it was left under narrow restrictions; and Spain had never abandoned the dream of restoring its old monopoly. Her efforts however to restore it had as yet been baffled; while the restrictions were evaded by a vast system of smuggling which rendered what remained of the Spanish monopoly all but valueless. Philip however persisted in his efforts to bring down English intercourse with his colonies to the importation of negroes and the despatch of a single merchant vessel, as stipulated by the Treaty of Utrecht; and from the moment of the compact with France the

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CHAP. IV. restrictions were enforced with a fresh rigour. Collisions took place which made it hard to keep the peace; and in 1738 the ill humour of the trading classes was driven to madness by the appearance of a merchant captain named Jenkins at the bar of the House of Commons. He told the tale of his torture by the Spaniards, and produced an ear which, he said, they had cut off amidst taunts at England and its King. It was in vain that Walpole strove to do justice to both parties, and that he battled stubbornly against the cry for a war which he knew to be an unjust one, and to be as impolitic as it was unjust. He saw that the House of Bourbon was only waiting for the Emperor's death to deal its blow at the House of Austria; and the Emperor's death was now close at hand. At such a juncture it was of the highest importance that England should be free to avail herself of every means to guard the European settlement, and that she should not tie her hands by a contest which would divert her attention from the great crisis which was impending, as well as drain the forces which would have enabled Walpole to deal with it.

War with
Spain.

But his efforts were in vain. His negotiations were foiled by the frenzy of the one country and the pride of the other. At home his enemies assailed him with a storm of abuse. Pope and Johnson alike lent their pens to lampoon the minister. Ballad singers trolled out their rimes to the crowd on "the cur-dog of Britain and spaniel of Spain." His position had been weakened by the death of the Queen; and it was now weakened yet more by the open hostility of the Prince of Wales, who in his hatred of his father had come to hate his father's ministers as heartily as George the Second had hated those of George the First. His mastery of the House of Commons too was no longer unquestioned. The Tories were slowly returning to Parliament, and their numbers had now mounted to a hundred and ten. The numbers and the violence of the "Patriots" had grown with the open patronage of Prince

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Frederick. The country was slowly turning against him. The counties now sent not a member to his support. Walpole's majority was drawn from the boroughs; it rested therefore on management, on corruption, and on the support of the trading classes. But with the cry for a commercial war the support of the trading class failed him. Even in his own cabinet, though he had driven from it every man of independence, he was pressed at this juncture to yield by the Duke of Newcastle and his brother Henry Pelham, who were fast acquiring political importance from their wealth, and from their prodigal devotion of it to the purchase of parliamentary support. But it was not till he stood utterly alone that Walpole gave way, and that he consented in 1739 to a war against Spain.

"They may ring their bells now," the great minister said bitterly, as peals and bonfires welcomed his surrender; "but they will soon be wringing their hands." His foresight was at once justified. No sooner had Admiral Vernon appeared off the coast of South America with an English fleet, and captured Porto Bello, than France gave an indication of her purpose to act on the secret compact by a formal declaration that she would not consent to any English settlement on the mainland of South America, and by despatching two squadrons to the West Indies. But it was plain that the union of the Bourbon Courts had larger aims than the protection of Spanish America. The Emperor was dying; and pledged as France was to the Pragmatic Sanction few believed she would redeem her pledge. It had been given indeed with reluctance; even the peace-loving Fleury had said that France ought to have lost three battles before she confirmed it. And now that the opportunity had at last come for finishing the work which Henry the Second had begun, of breaking up the Empire into a group of powers too weak to resist French aggression, it was idle to expect her to pass it by. If once the hereditary dominions of the House of Austria were parted amongst various claimants, if the dignity

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The
Austrian
succession.

CHAP. IV. of the Emperor was no longer supported by the mass of dominion which belonged personally to the Hapsburgs, France would be left without a rival on the Continent. Walpole at once turned to face this revival of a danger which the Grand Alliance had defeated. Not only the House of Austria but Russia too was called on to join in a league against the Bourbons; and Prussia, the German power to which Walpole had leant from the beginning, was counted on to give an aid as firm as Brandenburg had given in the older struggle. But the project remained a mere plan when in October 1740 the death of Charles the Sixth forced on the European struggle.

*Fall of
Walpole.*

The plan of the English Cabinet at once broke down. The new King of Prussia, Frederick the Second, whom English opinion had hailed as destined to play the part in the new league which his ancestor had played in the old, suddenly showed himself the most vigorous assailant of the House of Hapsburg; and while Frederick claimed Silesia, Bavaria claimed the Austrian Duchies, which passed with the other hereditary dominions according to the Pragmatic Sanction to Maria Theresa, or, as she was now called, the Queen of Hungary. The hour was come for the Bourbon courts to act. In union with Spain, which aimed at the annexation of the Milanese, France promised her aid to Prussia and Bavaria; while Sweden and Sardinia allied themselves to France. In the summer of 1741 two French armies entered Germany, and the Elector of Bavaria appeared unopposed before Vienna. Never had the House of Austria stood in such peril. Its opponents counted on a division of its dominions. France claimed the Netherlands, Spain the Milanese, Bavaria the kingdom of Bohemia, Frederick the Second Silesia. Hungary and the Duchy of Austria alone were left to Maria Theresa. Walpole, though still true to her cause, advised her to purchase Frederick's aid against France and her allies by the cession of part of Silesia. The counsel was wise, for Frederick in hope of some such turn of events

had as yet held aloof from actual alliance with France, but the Patriots spurred the Queen to refusal by promising her England's aid in the recovery of her full inheritance. Walpole's last hope of rescuing Austria was broken by this resolve; and Frederick was driven to conclude the alliance with France from which he had so stubbornly held aloof. But the Queen refused to despair. She won the support of Hungary by restoring its constitutional rights; and British subsidies enabled her to march at the head of a Hungarian army to the rescue of Vienna, to overrun Bavaria, and repulse an attack of Frederick on Moravia in the spring of 1742. On England's part, however, the war was waged feebly and ineffectively. Admiral Vernon was beaten before Carthage; and Walpole was charged with thwarting and starving his operations. With the same injustice, the selfishness with which George the Second hurried to Hanover, and in his dread of harm to his hereditary state averted the entry of a French army by binding himself as Elector to neutrality in the war, though the step had been taken without Walpole's knowledge, was laid to the minister's charge. His power indeed was ebbing every day. He still repelled the attacks of the "Patriots" with wonderful spirit; but in a new Parliament which was called at this crisis his majority dropped to sixteen, and in his own Cabinet he became almost powerless. The buoyant temper which had carried him through so many storms broke down at last. "He who was asleep as soon as his head touched the pillow," writes his son, "now never sleeps above an hour without waking: and he who at dinner always forgot his own anxieties, and was more gay and thoughtless than all the company, now sits without speaking and with his eyes fixed for an hour together." The end was in fact near; and in the opening of 1742 the dwindling of his majority to three forced Walpole to resign.

His fall however made no change in English policy, at home or abroad. The bulk of his ministry had opposed

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Carteret.

CHAP. IV. him in his later years of office, and at his retirement they resumed their posts, simply admitting some of the more prominent members of opposition, and giving the control of foreign affairs to Lord Carteret, a man of great power, and skilled in continental affairs. Carteret mainly followed the system of his predecessor. It was in the union of Austria and Prussia that he looked for the means of destroying the hold France had now established in Germany by the election of her puppet, Charles of Bavaria, as Emperor; and the pressure of England, aided by a victory of Frederick at Chotusitz, forced Maria Theresa to consent to Walpole's plan of a peace with Prussia at Breslau on the terms of the cession of Silesia. The peace at once realized Carteret's hopes by enabling the Austrian army to drive the French from Bohemia at the close of 1742, while the new minister threw a new vigour into the warlike efforts of England itself. One English fleet blockaded Cadiz, another anchored in the bay of Naples and forced Don Carlos by a threat of bombarding his capital to conclude a treaty of neutrality, and English subsidies detached Sardinia from the French alliance.

Dettingen. The aim of Carteret and of the Court of Vienna was now not only to set up the Pragmatic Sanction, but to undo the French encroachments of 1736. Naples and Sicily were to be taken back from their Spanish King, Elsass and Lorraine from France; and the imperial dignity was to be restored to the Austrian House. To carry out these schemes an Austrian army drove the Emperor from Bavaria in the spring of 1743; while George the Second, who warmly supported Carteret's policy, put himself at the head of a force of 40,000 men, the bulk of whom were English and Hanoverians, and marched from the Netherlands to the Main. His advance was checked and finally turned into a retreat by the Duc de Noailles, who appeared with a superior army on the south bank of the river, and finally throwing 31,000 men across it threatened to compel the King to surrender. In the battle of Dettingen which

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followed, however, on the 27th June, 1743, not only was the allied army saved from destruction by the impetuosity of the French horse and the dogged obstinacy with which the English held their ground, but their opponents were forced to recross the Main. Small as was the victory, it produced amazing results. The French evacuated Germany. The English and Austrian armies appeared on the Rhine; and a league between England, Prussia, and the Queen of Hungary, seemed all that was needed to secure the results already gained.

But the prospect of peace was overthrown by the ambition of the House of Austria. In the spring of 1744 an Austrian army marched upon Naples, with the purpose of transferring it after its conquest to the Bavarian Emperor, whose hereditary dominions in Bavaria were to pass in return to Maria Theresa. Its march at once forced the Prussian King into a fresh attitude of hostility. If Frederick had withdrawn from the war on the cession of Silesia, he was resolute to take up arms again rather than suffer so great an aggrandisement of the House of Austria in Germany. His sudden alliance with France failed at first to change the course of the war; for though he was successful in seizing Prague and drawing the Austrian army from the Rhine, Frederick was driven from Bohemia, while the death of the Emperor forced Bavaria to lay down its arms and to ally itself with Maria Theresa. So high were the Queen's hopes at this moment that she formed a secret alliance with Russia for the division of the Prussian monarchy. But in 1745 the tide turned, and the fatal results of Carteret's weakness in assenting to a change in the character of the struggle which transformed it from a war of defence into one of attack became manifest. The young French King, Lewis the Fifteenth, himself led an army into the Netherlands; and the refusal of Holland to act against him left their defence wholly in the hands of England. The general anger at this widening of the war proved fatal to Carteret, or as he now became,

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*Fall of
Carteret.*

CHAP. IV. Earl Granville. His imperious temper had rendered him odious to his colleagues, and he was driven from office by the Pelhams, who not only forced George against his will to dismiss him, but foiled the King's attempt to construct a new administration with Granville at its head.

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The
Pelham
Ministry.

Of the reconstituted ministry which followed Henry Pelham became the head. His temper as well as a consciousness of his own mediocrity disposed him to a policy of conciliation which reunited the Whigs. Chesterfield and the Whigs in opposition, with Pitt and "the boys," all found room in the new administration; and even a few Tories, who had given help to Pelham's party, found admittance. Their entry was the first breach in the system of purely party government established on the accession of George the First, though it was more than compensated by the new strength and unity of the Whigs. But the chief significance of Carteret's fall lay in its bearing on foreign policy. The rivalry of Hanover with Prussia for a headship of North Germany found expression in the bitter hostility of George the Second to Frederick; and it was in accord with George that Carteret had lent himself to the vengeance of Austria on her most dangerous opponent. But the bulk of the Whigs remained true to the policy of Walpole, while the entry of the Patriots into the ministry had been on the condition that English interests should be preferred to Hanoverian. It was to pave the way to an accommodation with Frederick and a close of the war that the Pelhams forced Carteret to resign. But it was long before the new system could be brought to play, for the main attention of the new ministry had to be given to the war in Flanders, where Marshal Saxe had established the superiority of the French army by his defeat of the Duke of Cumberland. Advancing to the relief of Tournay with a force of English, Hanoverians, and Dutch—for Holland, however reluctantly, had at last been dragged into the war, though by English subsidies—the Duke on the 31st of May 1745 found the French covered by a line of fortified villages and redoubts

with but a single narrow gap near the hamlet of Fontenoy. Into this gap, however, the English troops, formed in a dense column, doggedly thrust themselves in spite of a terrible fire; but at the moment when the day seemed won the French guns, rapidly concentrated in their front, tore the column in pieces and drove it back in a slow and orderly retreat. The blow was followed up in June by a victory of Frederick at Hohenfriedburg which drove the Austrians from Silesia, and by the landing of a Stuart on the coast of Scotland at the close of July.

The war with France had at once revived the hopes of the Jacobites; and as early as 1744 Charles Edward, the grandson of James the Second, was placed by the French Government at the head of a formidable armament. But his plan of a descent on Scotland was defeated by a storm which wrecked his fleet, and by the march of the French troops which had sailed in it to the war in Flanders. In 1745 however the young adventurer again embarked with but seven friends in a small vessel and landed on a little island of the Hebrides. For three weeks he stood almost alone; but on the 29th of August the clans rallied to his standard in Glenfinnan, and Charles found himself at the head of fifteen hundred men. His force swelled to an army as he marched through Blair Athol on Perth, entered Edinburgh in triumph, and proclaimed "James the Eighth" at the Town Cross; and two thousand English troops who marched against him under Sir John Cope were broken and cut to pieces on the 21st of September by a single charge of the clansmen at Preston Pans. Victory at once doubled the forces of the conqueror. The Prince was now at the head of six thousand men; but all were still Highlanders, for the people of the Lowlands held aloof from his standard, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he could induce them to follow him to the south. His tact and energy however at last conquered every obstacle, and after skilfully evading an army gathered at Newcastle he marched through Lancashire, and pushed on

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Charles
Edward
Stuart.

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the 4th of December as far as Derby. But here all hope of success came to an end. Hardly a man had risen in his support as he passed through the districts where Jacobitism boasted of its strength. The people flocked to see his march as if to see a show. Catholics and Tories abounded in Lancashire, but only a single squire took up arms. Manchester was looked on as the most Jacobite of English towns, but all the aid it gave was an illumination and two thousand pounds. From Carlisle to Derby he had been joined by hardly two hundred men. The policy of Walpole had in fact secured England for the House of Hanover. The long peace, the prosperity of the country, and the clemency of the Government, had done their work. The recent admission of Tories into the administration had severed the Tory party finally from the mere Jacobites. Jacobitism as a fighting force was dead, and even Charles Edward saw that it was hopeless to conquer England with five thousand Highlanders.

Conquest
of the
Highlands.

He soon learned too that forces of double his own strength were closing on either side of him, while a third army under the King and Lord Stair covered London. Scotland itself, now that the Highlanders were away, quietly renewed in all the districts of the Lowlands its allegiance to the House of Hanover. Even in the Highlands the Macleods rose in arms for King George, while the Gordons refused to stir, though roused by a small French force which landed at Montrose. To advance further south was impossible, and Charles fell rapidly back on Glasgow; but the reinforcements which he found there raised his army to nine thousand men, and on the 23rd January, 1746, he boldly attacked an English army under General Hawley which had followed his retreat and had encamped near Falkirk. Again the wild charge of his Highlanders won victory for the Prince, but victory was as fatal as defeat. The bulk of his forces dispersed with their booty to the mountains, and Charles fell sullenly back to the north before the Duke of Cumberland. On the 16th of April the two

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armies faced one another on Culloden Moor, a few miles eastward of Inverness. The Highlanders still numbered six thousand men, but they were starving and dispirited, while Cumberland's force was nearly double that of the Prince. Torn by the Duke's guns, the clansmen flung themselves in their old fashion on the English front; but they were received with a terrible fire of musketry, and the few that broke through the first line found themselves fronted by a second. In a few moments all was over, and the Stuart force was a mass of hunted fugitives. Charles himself after strange adventures escaped to France. In England fifty of his followers were hanged; three Scotch lords, Lovat, Balmerino, and Kilmarnock, brought to the block; and forty persons of rank attainted by Act of Parliament. More extensive measures of repression were needful in the Highlands. The feudal tenures were abolished. The hereditary jurisdictions of the chiefs were bought up and transferred to the Crown. The tartan, or garb of the Highlanders, was forbidden by law. These measures, and a general Act of Indemnity which followed them, proved effective for their purpose. The dread of the clansmen passed away, and the sheriff's writ soon ran through the Highlands with as little resistance as in the streets of Edinburgh.

Defeat abroad and danger at home only quickened the resolve of the Pelhams to bring the war, so far as England and Prussia went, to an end. When England was threatened by a Catholic Pretender, it was no time for weakening the chief Protestant power in Germany. On the refusal therefore of Maria Theresa to join in a general peace, England concluded the Convention of Hanover with Prussia at the close of August, and withdrew so far as Germany was concerned from the war. Elsewhere however the contest lingered on. The victories of Maria Theresa in Italy were balanced by those of France in the Netherlands, where Marshal Saxe inflicted new defeats on the English and Dutch at Roucoux and Lauffeld. The danger

Widening
of the
War.

CHAP. IV. of Holland and the financial exhaustion of France at last brought about in 1748 the conclusion of a peace at Aix-la-Chapelle, by which England surrendered its gains at sea, and France its conquests on land. But the peace was a mere pause in the struggle, during which both parties hoped to gain strength for a mightier contest which they saw impending. The war was in fact widening far beyond the bounds of Germany or of Europe. It was becoming a world-wide duel which was to settle the destinies of mankind. Already France was claiming the valleys of the Ohio and the Mississippi, and mooted the great question whether the fortunes of the New World were to be moulded by Frenchmen or Englishmen. Already too French adventurers were driving English merchants from Madras, and building up, as they trusted, a power which was to add India to the dominions of France.

Clive. The intercourse of England with India had as yet given little promise of the great fortunes which awaited it. It was not till the close of Elizabeth's reign, a century after Vasco de Gama had crept round the Cape of Good Hope and founded the Portuguese settlement on the Goa Coast, that an East India Company was founded in London. The trade, profitable as it was, remained small in extent; and the three early factories of the Company were only gradually acquired during the century which followed. The first, that of Madras, consisted of but six fishermen's houses beneath Fort St. George; that of Bombay was ceded by the Portuguese as part of the dowry of Catharine of Braganza; while Fort William, with the mean village which has since grown into Calcutta, owes its origin to the reign of William the Third. Each of these forts was built simply for the protection of the Company's warehouses, and guarded by a few "sepahis," sepoys, or paid native soldiers; while the clerks and traders of each establishment were under the direction of a President and a Council. One of these clerks in the middle of the eighteenth century was Robert Clive, the son of a small

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proprietor near Market Drayton in Shropshire, an idle dare-devil of a boy whom his friends had been glad to get rid of by packing him off in the Company's service as a writer to Madras. His early days there were days of wretchedness and despair. He was poor and cut off from his fellows by the haughty shyness of his temper, weary of desk-work, and haunted by home sickness. Twice he attempted suicide; and it was only on the failure of his second attempt that he flung down the pistol which baffled him with a conviction that he was reserved for higher things.

A change came at last in the shape of war and captivity. As soon as the war of the Austrian Succession broke out the superiority of the French in power and influence tempted them to expel the English from India. Labourdonnais, the governor of the French colony of the Mauritius, besieged Madras, razed it to the ground, and carried its clerks and merchants prisoners to Pondicherry. Clive was among these captives, but he escaped in disguise, and returning to the settlement, threw aside his clerkship for an ensign's commission in a force which the Company was busily raising. For the capture of Madras had not only established the repute of the French arms, but had roused Dupleix, the governor of Pondicherry, to conceive plans for the creation of a French empire in India. When the English merchants of Elizabeth's day brought their goods to Surat, all India, save the south, had just been brought for the first time under the rule of a single great power by the Mogul Emperors of the line of Akbar. But with the death of Aurungzebe, in the reign of Anne, the Mogul Empire fell fast into decay. A line of feudal princes raised themselves to independence in Rajpootana. The lieutenants of the Emperor founded separate sovereignties at Lucknow and Hyderabad, in the Carnatic, and in Bengal. The plain of the Upper Indus was occupied by a race of religious fanatics called the Sikhs. Persian and Affghan invaders crossed the Indus, and succeeded

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Dupleix.

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even in sacking Delhi, the capital of the Moguls. Clans of systematic plunderers, who were known under the name of Mahrattas, and who were in fact the natives whom conquest had long held in subjection, poured down from the highlands along the western coast, ravaged as far as Calcutta and Tanjore, and finally set up independent states at Poonah and Gwalior.

Dupleix skilfully availed himself of the disorder around him. He offered his aid to the Emperor against the rebels and invaders who had reduced his power to a shadow; and it was in the Emperor's name that he meddled with the quarrels of the states of Central and Southern India, made himself virtually master of the Court of Hyderabad, and seated a creature of his own on the throne of the Carnatic. Trichinopoly, the one town which held out against this Nabob of the Carnatic, was all but brought to surrender when Clive, in 1751, came forward with a daring scheme for its relief. With a few hundred English and sepoy he pushed through a thunderstorm to the surprise of Arcot, the Nabob's capital, entrenched himself in its enormous fort, and held it for fifty days against thousands of assailants. Moved by his gallantry, the Mahrattas, who had never before believed that Englishmen would fight, advanced and broke up the siege. But Clive was no sooner freed than he showed equal vigour in the field. At the head of raw recruits who ran away at the first sound of a gun, and sepoy who hid themselves as soon as the cannon opened fire, he twice attacked and defeated the French and their Indian allies, foiled every effort of Dupleix, and razed to the ground a pompous pillar which the French governor had set up in honour of his earlier victories.

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American
Colonies.

Clive was recalled by broken health to England, and the fortunes of the struggle in India were left for decision to a later day. But while France was struggling for the Empire of the East she was striving with even more apparent success for the command of the new world

of the West. From the time when the Puritan emigration added the four New England States, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island to those of Maryland and Virginia the progress of the English colonies in North America had been slow, but it had never ceased. Settlers still came, though in smaller numbers, and two new colonies south of Virginia received from Charles the Second their name of the Carolinas. The war with Holland in 1664 transferred to British rule a district claimed by the Dutch from the Hudson to the inner Lakes; and this country, which was granted by Charles to his brother, received from him the name of New York. Portions were soon broken off from its vast territory to form the colonies of New Jersey and Delaware. In 1682 a train of Quakers followed William Penn across the Delaware into the heart of the primæval forest, and became a colony which recalled its founder and the woodlands among which he planted it in its name of Pennsylvania. A long interval elapsed before a new settlement, which received its title of Georgia from the reigning sovereign, George the Second, was established by General Oglethorpe on the Savannah as a refuge for English debtors and for the persecuted Protestants of Germany.

Slow as this progress seemed, the colonies were really growing fast in numbers and in wealth. Their whole population amounted at the time we have reached to about 1,200,000 whites and a quarter of a million of negroes; and this amounted to nearly a fourth of that of the mother country. Its increase indeed was amazing. The inhabitants of Virginia were doubling in every twenty-one years, while Massachusetts saw five-and-twenty new towns spring into existence in a quarter of a century. The wealth of the colonists was growing even faster than their numbers. As yet the southern colonies were the more productive. Virginia boasted of its tobacco plantations, Georgia and the Carolinas of their maize and rice and indigo crops, while New York and Pennsylvania, with

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the colonies of New England, were restricted to their whale and cod fisheries, their corn-harvests, and their timber trade. The distinction indeed between the northern and southern colonies was more than an industrial one. While New England absorbed half a million of whites, and the middle colonies from the Hudson to the Potomac contained almost as many, there were less than 300,000 whites in those to the south of the Potomac. These on the other hand contained 130,000 negroes, and the central States 70,000, while but 11,000 were found in the States of New England. In the Southern States this prevalence of slavery produced an aristocratic spirit and favoured the creation of large estates; even the system of entails had been introduced among the wealthy planters of Virginia, where many of the older English families found representatives in houses such as those of Fairfax and Washington. Throughout New England, on the other hand, the characteristics of the Puritans, their piety, their intolerance, their simplicity of life, their pedantry, their love of equality and tendency to democratic institutions, remained unchanged. There were few large fortunes, though the comfort was general. "Some of the most considerable provinces of America," said Burke in 1769, "such for instance as Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay, have not in each of them two men who can afford at a distance from their estates to spend a thousand pounds a year." In education and political activity New England stood far ahead of its fellow colonies, for the settlement of the Puritans had been followed at once by the establishment of a system of local schools which is still the glory of America. "Every township," it was enacted, "after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall appoint one to teach all children to write and read; and when any town shall increase to the number of a hundred families, they shall set up a grammar school." The result was that in the midst of the eighteenth century

New England was the one part of the world where every man and woman was able to read and write.

Great however as these differences were, and great as was to be their influence on American history, they were little felt as yet. In the main features of their outer organization the whole of the colonies stood fairly at one. In religious and in civil matters alike all of them contrasted sharply with the England at home. Europe saw for the first time a state growing up amidst the forests of the West where religious freedom had become complete. Religious tolerance had in fact been brought about by a medley of religious faiths such as the world had never seen before. New England was still a Puritan stronghold. In all the Southern colonies the Episcopal Church was established by law, and the bulk of the settlers clung to it; but Roman Catholics formed a large part of the population of Maryland. Pennsylvania was a State of Quakers. Presbyterians and Baptists had fled from tests and persecutions to colonize New Jersey. Lutherans and Moravians from Germany abounded among the settlers of Carolina and Georgia. In such a chaos of creeds religious persecution became impossible. There was the same outer diversity and the same real unity in the political tendency and organization of the States. The colonists proudly looked on the Constitutions of their various States as copies of that of the mother country. England had given them her system of self-government, as she had given them her law, her language, her religion, and her blood. But the circumstances of their settlement had freed them from many of the worst abuses which clogged the action of constitutional government at home. The representative suffrage was in some cases universal and in all proportioned to population. There were no rotten boroughs, and members of the legislative assemblies were subject to annual re-election. The will of the settlers told in this way directly and immediately on the legislation in a way unknown to the English Parliament, and the settlers were men whose will

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condition.

CHAP. IV. was braced and invigorated by their personal independence and comfort, the tradition of their past, and the personal temper which was created by the greater loneliness and self-dependence of their lives. Whether the spirit of the colony was democratic, moderate, or oligarchical, its form of government was pretty much the same. The original rights of the proprietor, the projector and grantee of the earliest settlement, had in all cases, save in those of Pennsylvania and Maryland, either ceased to exist or fallen into desuetude. The government of each colony lay in a House of Assembly elected by the people at large, with a Council sometimes elected, sometimes nominated by the Governor, and a Governor appointed by the Crown, or, as in Connecticut and Rhode Island, chosen by the colonists.

English control.

With the appointment of these Governors all administrative interference on the part of the Government at home practically ended. The superintendence of the colonies rested with a Board for Trade and Plantations, which, though itself without executive power, advised the Secretary of State for the Southern Department, within which America was included. But for two centuries they were left by a happy neglect to themselves. It was wittily said at a later day that "Mr. Grenville lost America because he read the American despatches, which none of his predecessors ever did." There was little room indeed for any interference within the limits of the colonies. Their privileges were secured by royal charters. Their Assemblies alone exercised the right of internal taxation, and they exercised it sparingly. Walpole, like Pitt afterwards, set roughly aside the project for an American excise. "I have Old England set against me," he said, "by this measure, and do you think I will have New England too?" America, in fact, contributed to England's resources not by taxation, but by the monopoly of her trade. It was from England that she might import, to England alone that she might send her exports. She

was prohibited from manufacturing her own products, or from exporting them in any but a raw state for manufacture in the mother country. But even in matters of trade the supremacy of the mother country was far from being a galling one. There were some small import duties, but they were evaded by a well-understood system of smuggling. The restriction of trade with the colonies to Great Britain was more than compensated by the commercial privileges which the Americans enjoyed as British subjects.

As yet therefore there was nothing to break the good will which the colonists felt towards the mother country, while the danger of French aggression drew them closely to it. Populous as they had become, the English settlements still lay mainly along the sea-board of the Atlantic; for only a few exploring parties had penetrated into the Alleghanies before the Seven Years' War; and Indian tribes wandered unquestioned along the lakes. It was not till the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 that the pretensions of France drew the eyes of the colonists and of English statesmen to the interior of the Western continent. Planted firmly in Louisiana and Canada, France openly claimed the whole country west of the Alleghanies as its own, and its governors now ordered all English settlers or merchants to be driven from the valleys of Ohio or Mississippi which were still in the hands of Indian tribes. Even the inactive Pelham revolted against pretensions such as these; and the Duke of Bedford, who was then Secretary for the Southern Department, was stirred to energetic action. The original French settlers were driven from Acadia or Nova Scotia, and an English colony planted there, whose settlement of Halifax still bears the name of its founder Lord Halifax, the head of the Board of Trade. An Ohio Company was formed, and its agents made their way to the valleys of that river and the Kentucky; while envoys from Virginia and Pennsylvania drew closer the alliance between their colonies and the Indian tribes across

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French aggression.

CHAP. IV. the mountains. Nor were the French slow to accept the challenge. Fighting began in Acadia. A vessel of war appeared in Ontario, and Niagara was turned into a fort. *The House of Hanover.* A force of 1,200 men despatched to Erie drove the few English settlers from their little colony on the fork of the Ohio, and founded there a fort called Duquesne, on the site of the later Pittsburg. The fort at once gave this force command of the river valley. After a fruitless attack on it under George Washington, a young Virginian, who had been despatched with a handful of men to meet the danger, the colonists were forced to withdraw over the mountains, and the whole of the west was left in the hands of France.

Rout of Braddock. It was natural that at such a crisis the mother country should look to the united efforts of the colonies, and Halifax pressed for a joint arrangement which should provide a standing force and funds for its support. A plan for this purpose on the largest scale was drawn up by Benjamin Franklin, who, from a printer's boy, had risen to supreme influence in Pennsylvania; but in the way of such a union stood the jealousies which each state entertained of its neighbour, the disinclination of the colonists to be drawn into an expensive struggle, and, above all, suspicion of the motives of Halifax and his colleagues. The delay in furnishing any force for defence, the impossibility of bringing the colonies to any agreement, and the perpetual squabbles of their legislatures with the governors appointed by the Crown, may have been the motives which induced Halifax to introduce a Bill which would have made orders by the King in spite of the colonial charters law in America. The Bill was dropped in deference to the constitutional objections of wiser men; but the governors fed the fear in England of the "levelling principles" of the colonists, and every official in America wrote home to demand that Parliament should do what the colonial legislatures seemed unable to do, and establish a common fund for defence by a general taxation. Already plans were mooted for deriving a revenue for the colonies. But the

prudence of Pelham clung to the policy of Walpole, and nothing was done; while the nearer approach of a struggle in Europe gave fresh vigour to the efforts of France. The Marquis of Montcalm, who was now governor of Canada, carried out with even greater zeal than his predecessor the plans of annexation; and the three forts of Duquesne on the Ohio, of Niagara on the St. Lawrence, and of Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, were linked together by a chain of lesser forts, which cut off the English colonists from all access to the west. Montcalm was gifted with singular powers of administration; he had succeeded in attaching the bulk of the Indian tribes from Canada as far as the Mississippi to the cause of France; and the value of their aid was shown in 1755, when General Braddock led a force of English soldiers and American militia to a fresh attack upon fort Duquesne. The force was utterly routed and Braddock slain.

The defeat woke England to its danger; for it was certain that war in America would soon be followed by war in Europe itself. Newcastle and his fellow-ministers were still true in the main to Walpole's policy. They looked on a league with Prussia as indispensable to the formation of any sound alliance which could check France. "If you gain Prussia," wrote the veteran Lord Chancellor, Hardwicke, to Newcastle in 1748, "the Confederacy will be restored and made whole, and become a real strength; if you do not, it will continue lame and weak, and much in the power of France." Frederick however held cautiously aloof from any engagement. The league between Prussia and the Queen of Hungary, which England desired, Frederick knew in fact to be impossible. He knew that the Queen's passionate resolve to recover Silesia must end in a contest in which England must take one part or the other; and as yet, if the choice had to be made, Austria seemed likely to be the favoured ally. The traditional friendship of the Whigs for that power combined with the tendencies of George the Second to make an Austrian

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State of Europe.

CHAP. IV. alliance more probable than a Prussian one. The advances of England to Frederick only served therefore to alienate Maria Theresa, whose one desire was to regain Silesia, and whose hatred and jealousy of the new Protestant power which had so suddenly risen into rivalry with her house for the supremacy of Germany blinded her to the older rivalry between her house and France. The two powers of the House of Bourbon were still bound by the Family Compact, and eager for allies in the strife with England which the struggles in India and America were bringing hourly nearer. It was as early as 1752 that by a startling change of policy Maria Theresa drew to their alliance. The jealousy which Russia entertained of the growth of a strong power in North Germany brought the Czarina Elizabeth to promise aid to the schemes of the Queen of Hungary; and in 1755 the league of the four powers and of Saxony was practically completed. So secret were these negotiations that they remained unknown to Henry Pelham and to his brother the Duke of Newcastle, who succeeded him on his death in 1754 as the head of the Ministry. But they were detected from the first by the keen eye of Frederick of Prussia, who saw himself fronted by a line of foes that stretched from Paris to St. Petersburg.

*Alliance
with
Prussia.*

The danger to England was hardly less; for France appeared again on the stage with a vigour and audacity which recalled the days of Lewis the Fourteenth. The weakness and corruption of the French government were screened for a time by the daring and scope of its plans, as by the ability of the agents it found to carry them out. In England, on the contrary, all was vagueness and indecision. The action of the King showed only his Hanoverian jealousy of the House of Brandenburg. It was certain that France, as soon as war broke out in the West, would attack his Electorate; and George sought help not at Berlin but at St. Petersburg. He concluded a treaty with Russia, which promised him the help of a Russian army on the Weser in return for a subsidy.

Such a treaty meant war with Frederick, who had openly announced his refusal to allow the entry of Russian forces on German soil; and it was vehemently though fruitlessly opposed by William Pitt. But he had hardly withdrawn with Grenville and Charles Townshend from the Ministry when Newcastle himself recoiled from the King's policy. The Russian subsidy was refused, and Hanoverian interests subordinated to those of England by the conclusion of the treaty with Frederick of Prussia for which Pitt had pressed. The new compact simply provided for the neutrality of both Prussia and Hanover in any contest between England and France. But its results were far from being as peaceable as its provisions. Russia was outraged by Frederick's open opposition to her presence in Germany; France resented his compact with and advances towards England; and Maria Theresa eagerly seized on the temper of both those powers to draw them into common action against the Prussian king. With the treaty between England and Frederick indeed began the Seven Years' War.

No war has had greater results on the history of the world or brought greater triumphs to England: but few have had more disastrous beginnings. Newcastle was too weak and ignorant to rule without aid, and yet too greedy of power to purchase aid by sharing it with more capable men. His preparations for the gigantic struggle before him may be guessed from the fact that there were but three regiments fit for service in England at the opening of 1756. France on the other hand was quick in her attack. Port Mahon in Minorca, the key of the Mediterranean, was besieged by the Duke of Richelieu and forced to capitulate. To complete the shame of England, a fleet sent to its relief under Admiral Byng fell back before the French. In Germany Frederick seized Dresden at the outset of the war and forced the Saxon army to surrender; and in 1757 a victory at Prague made him master for a while of Bohemia; but his success was transient, and a defeat at Kolin drove him to retreat

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CHAP. IV. again into Saxony. In the same year the Duke of Cumberland, who had taken post on the Weser with an army of fifty thousand men for the defence of Hanover, fell back before a French army to the mouth of the Elbe, and engaged by the Convention of Closter-Seven to disband his forces. In America things went even worse than in Germany. The inactivity of the English generals was contrasted with the genius and activity of Montcalm. Already masters of the Ohio by the defeat of Braddock, the French drove the English garrison from the forts which commanded Lake Ontario and Lake Champlain, and their empire stretched without a break over the vast territory from Louisiana to the St. Lawrence.

William
Pitt.

A despondency without parallel in our history took possession of our coolest statesmen, and even the impassive Chesterfield cried in despair, "We are no longer a nation." But the nation of which Chesterfield despaired was really on the eve of its greatest triumphs, and the incapacity of Newcastle only called to the front the genius of William Pitt. Pitt was the grandson of a wealthy governor of Madras, who had entered Parliament in 1735, as member for one of his father's pocket boroughs. A group of younger men, Lord Lyttelton, the Grenvilles, Wilkes, and others, gradually gathered round him, and formed a band of young "patriots," "the boys," as Walpole called them, who added to the difficulties of that minister. Pitt was as yet a cornet of horse, and the restless activity of his genius was seen in the energy with which he threw himself into his military duties. He told Lord Shelburne long afterwards that "during the time he was cornet of horse there was not a military book he did not read through." But the dismissal from the army with which Walpole met his violent attacks threw this energy wholly into politics. His fiery spirit was hushed in office during the "broad-bottom administration" which followed Walpole's fall, and he soon attained great influence over Henry Pelham. "I think him," wrote Pelham to his brother, "the most able

and useful man we have amongst us; truly honourable and strictly honest." He remained under Newcastle after Pelham's death, till the Duke's jealousy of power not only refused him the Secretaryship of State and admission to the Cabinet, but entrusted the lead of the House of Commons to a mere dependent. Pitt resisted the slight by an attitude of opposition; and his denunciation of the treaty with Russia served as a pretext for his dismissal. When the disasters of the war however drove Newcastle from office, in November, 1756, Pitt became Secretary of State, bringing with him into office his relatives, George Grenville and Lord Temple, as well as Charles Townshend. But though his popularity had forced him into office, and though the grandeur of his policy at once showed itself by his rejection of all schemes for taxing America, and by his raising a couple of regiments amongst the Highlanders, he found himself politically powerless. The House was full of Newcastle's creatures, the king hated him, and only four months after taking office he was forced to resign. The Duke of Cumberland insisted on his dismissal in April, 1757, before he would start to take the command in Germany. In July however it was necessary to recall him. The failure of Newcastle's attempt to construct an administration forced the Duke to a junction with his rival, and while Newcastle took the head of the Treasury, Pitt again became Secretary of State.

Fortunately for their country, the character of the two statesmen made the compromise an easy one. For all that Pitt coveted, for the general direction of public affairs, the control of foreign policy, the administration of the war, Newcastle had neither capacity nor inclination. On the other hand his skill in parliamentary management was unrivalled. If he knew little else, he knew better than any living man the price of every member and the intrigues of every borough. What he cared for was not the control of affairs, but the distribution of patronage and the

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work of corruption, and from this Pitt turned disdainfully away. "I borrow the Duke of Newcastle's majority," his colleague owned with cool contempt, "to carry on the public business." "Mr. Pitt does everything," wrote Horace Walpole, "and the Duke gives everything. So long as they agree in this partition they may do what they please." Out of the union of these two strangely-contrasted leaders, in fact, rose the greatest, as it was the last, of the purely Whig administrations. But its real power lay from beginning to end in Pitt himself. Poor as he was, for his income was little more than two hundred a year, and springing as he did from a family of no political importance, it was by sheer dint of genius that the young cornet of horse, at whose youth and inexperience Walpole had sneered, seized a power which the Whig houses had ever since the Revolution kept in their grasp. The real significance of his entry into the ministry was that the national opinion entered with him. He had no strength save from his "popularity," but this popularity showed that the political torpor of the nation was passing away, and that a new interest in public affairs and a resolve to have weight in them was becoming felt in the nation at large. It was by the sure instinct of a great people that this interest and resolve gathered themselves round William Pitt. If he was ambitious, his ambition had no petty aim. "I want to call England," he said, as he took office, "out of that enervate state in which twenty thousand men from France can shake her." His call was soon answered. He at once breathed his own lofty spirit into the country he served, as he communicated something of his own grandeur to the men who served him. "No man," said a soldier of the time, "ever entered Mr. Pitt's closet who did not feel himself braver when he came out than when he went in." Ill-combined as were his earlier expeditions, and many as were his failures, he roused a temper in the nation at large which made ultimate defeat impossible. "England has been a long time in labour," exclaimed Frederick of

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Prussia as he recognized a greatness like his own, "but she has at last brought forth a man."

It is this personal and solitary grandeur which strikes us most as we look back to William Pitt. The tone of his speech and action stands out in utter contrast with the tone of his time. In the midst of a society critical, polite, indifferent, simple even to the affectation of simplicity, witty and amusing but absolutely prosaic, cool of heart and of head, sceptical of virtue and enthusiasm, sceptical above all of itself, Pitt stood absolutely alone. The depth of his conviction, his passionate love for all that he deemed lofty and true, his fiery energy, his poetic imaginativeness, his theatrical airs and rhetoric, his haughty self-assumption, his pompousness and extravagance, were not more puzzling to his contemporaries than the confidence with which he appealed to the higher sentiments of mankind, the scorn with which he turned from a corruption which had till then been the great engine of politics, the undoubting faith which he felt in himself, in the grandeur of his aims, and in his power to carry them out. "I know that I can save the country," he said to the Duke of Devonshire on his entry into the Ministry, "and I know no other man can." The groundwork of Pitt's character was an intense and passionate pride; but it was a pride which kept him from stooping to the level of the men who had so long held England in their hands. He was the first statesman since the Restoration who set the example of a purely public spirit. Keen as was his love of power, no man ever refused office so often, or accepted it with so strict a regard to the principles he professed, "I will not go to Court," he replied to an offer which was made him, "if I may not bring the Constitution with me." For the corruption about him he had nothing but disdain. He left to Newcastle the buying of seats and the purchase of members. At the outset of his career Pelham appointed him to the most lucrative office in his administration, that of Paymaster of the Forces; but its profits were of an illicit kind, and poor

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as he was, Pitt refused to accept one farthing beyond his salary. His pride never appeared in loftier and nobler form than in his attitude towards the people at large. No leader had ever a wider popularity than "the great commoner," as Pitt was styled, but his air was always that of a man who commands popularity, not that of one who seeks it. He never bent to flatter popular prejudice. When mobs were roaring themselves hoarse for "Wilkes and liberty," he denounced Wilkes as a worthless profligate; and when all England went mad in its hatred of the Scots, Pitt haughtily declared his esteem for a people whose courage he had been the first to enlist on the side of loyalty. His noble figure, the hawk-like eye which flashed from the small thin face, his majestic voice, the fire and grandeur of his eloquence, gave him a sway over the House of Commons far greater than any other minister has possessed. He could silence an opponent with a look of scorn, or hush the whole House with a single word. But he never stooped to the arts by which men form a political party, and at the height of his power his personal following hardly numbered half a dozen members.

His
patriotism.

His real strength indeed lay not in Parliament but in the people at large. His title of "the great commoner" marks a political revolution. "It is the people who have sent me here," Pitt boasted with a haughty pride when the nobles of the Cabinet opposed his will. He was the first to see that the long political inactivity of the public mind had ceased, and that the progress of commerce and industry had produced a great middle class, which no longer found its representatives in the legislature. "You have taught me," said George the Second when Pitt sought to save Byng by appealing to the sentiment of Parliament, "to look for the voice of my people in other places than within the House of Commons." It was this unrepresented class which had forced him into power. During his struggle with Newcastle the greater towns backed him with the gift of their freedom and addresses of confidence.

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"For weeks," laughs Horace Walpole, "it rained gold boxes." London stood by him through good report and evil report, and the wealthiest of English merchants, Alderman Beckford, was proud to figure as his political lieutenant. The temper of Pitt indeed harmonized admirably with the temper of the commercial England which rallied round him, with its energy, its self-confidence, its pride, its patriotism, its honesty, its moral earnestness. The merchant and the trader were drawn by a natural attraction to the one statesman of their time whose aims were unselfish, whose hands were clean, whose life was pure and full of tender affection for wife and child. But there was a far deeper ground for their enthusiastic reverence and for the reverence which his country has borne Pitt ever since. He loved England with an intense and personal love. He believed in her power, her glory, her public virtue, till England learned to believe in herself. Her triumphs were his triumphs, her defeats his defeats. Her dangers lifted him high above all thought of self or party-spirit. "Be one people," he cried to the factions who rose to bring about his fall: "forget everything but the public! I set you the example!" His glowing patriotism was the real spell by which he held England. But even the faults which chequered his character told for him with the middle classes. The Whig statesmen who preceded him had been men whose pride expressed itself in a marked simplicity and absence of pretence. Pitt was essentially an actor, dramatic in the cabinet, in the House, in his very office. He transacted business with his clerks in full dress. His letters to his family, genuine as his love for them was, are stilted and unnatural in tone. It was easy for the wits of his day to jest at his affectation, his pompous gait, the dramatic appearance which he made on great debates with his limbs swathed in flannel and his crutch by his side. Early in life Walpole sneered at him for bringing into the House of Commons "the gestures and emotions of the stage." But the classes to whom Pitt

CHAP. IV. appealed were classes not easily offended by faults of taste, and saw nothing to laugh at in the statesman who was borne into the lobby amidst the tortures of the gout, or carried into the House of Lords to breathe his last in a protest against national dishonour.

His eloquence.

Above all Pitt wielded the strength of a resistless eloquence. The power of political speech had been revealed in the stormy debates of the Long Parliament, but it was cramped in its utterance by the legal and theological pedantry of the time. Pedantry was flung off by the age of the Revolution, but in the eloquence of Somers and his rivals we see ability rather than genius, knowledge, clearness of expression, precision of thought, the lucidity of the pleader or the man of business, rather than the passion of the orator. Of this clearness of statement Pitt had little or none. He was no ready debater like Walpole, no speaker of set speeches like Chesterfield. His set speeches were always his worst, for in these his want of taste, his love of effect, his trite quotations and extravagant metaphors came at once to the front. That with defects like these he stood far above every orator of his time was due above all to his profound conviction, to the earnestness and sincerity with which he spoke. "I must sit still," he whispered once to a friend, "for when once I am up everything that is in my mind comes out." But the reality of his eloquence was transfigured by a large and poetic imagination, an imagination so strong that—as he said himself—"most things returned to him with stronger force the second time than the first," and by a glow of passion which not only raised him high above the men of his own day but set him in the front rank among the orators of the world. The cool reasoning, the wit, the common sense of his age made way for a splendid audacity, a sympathy with popular emotion, a sustained grandeur, a lofty vehemence, a command over the whole range of human feeling. He passed without an effort from the most solemn appeal to the gayest raillery, from the keenest

sarcasm to the tenderest pathos. Every word was driven home by the grand self-consciousness of the speaker. He spoke always as one having authority. He was in fact the first English orator whose words were a power, a power not over Parliament only but over the nation at large. Parliamentary reporting was as yet unknown, and it was only in detached phrases and half-remembered outbursts that the voice of Pitt reached beyond the walls of St. Stephen's. But it was especially in these sudden outbursts of inspiration, in these brief passionate appeals, that the might of his eloquence lay. The few broken words we have of him stir the same thrill in men of our day which they stirred in the men of his own.

But passionate as was Pitt's eloquence, it was the eloquence of a statesman, not of a rhetorician. Time has approved almost all his greater struggles, his defence of the liberty of the subject against arbitrary imprisonment under "general warrants," of the liberty of the press against Lord Mansfield, of the rights of constituencies against the House of Commons, of the constitutional rights of America against England itself. His foreign policy was directed to the preservation of Prussia, and Prussia has vindicated his foresight by the creation of Germany. We have adopted his plans for the direct government of India by the Crown, plans which when he proposed them were regarded as insane. Pitt was the first to recognize the liberal character of the Church of England, its "Calvinistic Creed and Arminian Clergy;" he was the first to sound the note of Parliamentary reform. One of his earliest measures shows the generosity and originality of his mind. He quieted Scotland by employing its Jacobites in the service of their country and by raising Highland regiments among its clans. The selection of Wolfe and Amherst as generals showed his contempt for precedent and his inborn knowledge of men.

But it was rather Fortune than his genius that showered on Pitt the triumphs which signalized the opening of

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His statesmanship.

Plassey.

CHAP. IV. his ministry. In the East the daring of a merchant-clerk made a company of English traders the sovereigns of Bengal, and opened that wondrous career of conquest which has added the Indian peninsula, from Ceylon to the Himalayas, to the dominions of the British crown. Recalled by broken health to England, Clive returned at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War to win for England a greater prize than that which his victories had won for it in the supremacy of the Carnatic. He had been only a few months at Madras when a crime whose horror still lingers in English memories called him to Bengal. Bengal, the delta of the Ganges, was the richest and most fertile of all the provinces of India. Its rice, its sugar, its silk, and the produce of its looms, were famous in European markets. Its Viceroys, like their fellow lieutenants, had become practically independent of the Emperor, and had added to Bengal the provinces of Orissa and Behar. Surajah Dowlah, the master of this vast domain, had long been jealous of the enterprise and wealth of the English traders; and, roused at this moment by the instigation of the French, he appeared before Fort William, seized its settlers, and thrust a hundred and fifty of them into a small prison called the Black Hole of Calcutta. The heat of an Indian summer did its work of death. The wretched prisoners trampled each other under foot in the madness of thirst, and in the morning only twenty-three remained alive. Clive sailed at the news with a thousand Englishmen and two thousand sepoy to wreak vengeance for the crime. He was no longer the boy-soldier of Arcot; and the tact and skill with which he met Surajah Dowlah in the negotiations by which the Viceroy strove to avert a conflict were sullied by the Oriental falsehood and treachery to which he stooped. But his courage remained unbroken. When the two armies faced each other on the plain of Plassey the odds were so great that on the very eve of the battle a council of war counselled retreat. Clive withdrew to a grove hard by, and after an hour's lonely musing gave

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the word to fight. Courage, in fact, was all that was needed. The fifty thousand foot and fourteen thousand horse who were seen covering the plain at daybreak on the 23rd of June, 1757, were soon thrown into confusion by the English guns, and broke in headlong rout before the English charge. The death of Surajah Dowlah enabled the Company to place a creature of its own on the throne of Bengal; but his rule soon became a nominal one. With the victory of Plassey began in fact the Empire of England in the East.

The year of Plassey was the year of a victory hardly less important in the West. In Europe Pitt wisely limited himself to a secondary part. There was little in the military expeditions which marked the opening of his ministry to justify the trust of the country; for money and blood were lavished on buccaneering expeditions against the French coasts which did small damage to the enemy. But incidents such as these had little weight in the minister's general policy. His greatness lies in the fact that he at once recognized the genius of Frederick the Great, and resolved without jealousy or reserve to give him an energetic support. On his entry into office he refused to ratify the Convention of Closter-Seven, which had reduced Frederick to despair by throwing open his realm to a French advance; protected his flank by gathering an English and Hanoverian force on the Elbe, and on the counsel of the Prussian King placed the best of his generals, the Prince of Brunswick, at its head; while subsidy after subsidy were poured into Frederick's exhausted treasury. Pitt's trust was met by the most brilliant display of military genius which the modern world had as yet witnessed. In November, 1757, two months after his repulse at Kolin, Frederick flung himself on a French army which had advanced into the heart of Germany, and annihilated it in the victory of Rossbach. Before another month had passed he hurried from the Saale to the Oder, and by a yet more signal victory at Leuthen cleared Silesia of

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the Austrians. The victory of Rossbach was destined to change the fortunes of the world by creating the unity of Germany; its immediate effect was to force the French army on the Elbe to fall back on the Rhine. Here Ferdinand of Brunswick, reinforced with twenty thousand English soldiers, held them at bay during the summer of 1758; while Frederick, foiled in an attack on Moravia, drove the Russians back on Poland in the battle of Zorndorf. His defeat however by the Austrian General Daun at Hochkirch, proved the first of a series of terrible misfortunes; and the year 1759 marks the lowest point of his fortunes. A fresh advance of the Russian army forced the King to attack it at Kunersdorf in August, and Frederick's repulse ended in the utter rout of his army. For the moment all seemed lost, for even Berlin lay open to the conqueror. A few days later the surrender of Dresden gave Saxony to the Austrians; and at the close of the year an attempt upon them at Plauen was foiled with terrible loss. But every disaster was retrieved by the indomitable courage and tenacity of the King, and winter found him as before master of Silesia and of all Saxony save the ground which Daun's camp covered.

Minden
and
Quiberon.

The year which marked the lowest point of Frederick's fortunes was the year of Pitt's greatest triumphs, the year of Minden and Quiberon and Quebec. France aimed both at a descent upon England and at the conquest of Hanover; for the one purpose she gathered a naval armament at Brest, while fifty thousand men under Contades and Broglie united for the other on the Weser. Ferdinand with less than forty thousand met them (August 1) on the field of Minden. The French marched along the Weser to the attack, with their flanks protected by that river and a brook which ran into it, and with their cavalry, ten thousand strong, massed in the centre. The six English regiments in Ferdinand's army fronted the French horse, and, mistaking their general's order, marched at once upon them in line regardless of the batteries on their flank, and rolling back

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charge after charge with volleys of musketry. In an hour the French centre was utterly broken. "I have seen," said Contades, "what I never thought to be possible—a single line of infantry break through three lines of cavalry, ranked in order of battle, and tumble them to ruin!" Nothing but the refusal of Lord John Sackville to complete the victory by a charge of the horse which he headed saved the French from utter rout. As it was, their army again fell back broken on Frankfort and the Rhine. The project of an invasion of England met with the like success. Eighteen thousand men lay ready to embark on board the French fleet, when Admiral Hawke came in sight of it on the 20th of November at the mouth of Quiberon Bay. The sea was rolling high, and the coast where the French ships lay was so dangerous from its shoals and granite reefs that the pilot remonstrated with the English admiral against his project of attack. "You have done your duty in this remonstrance," Hawke coolly replied; "now lay me alongside the French admiral." Two English ships were lost on the shoals, but the French fleet was ruined and the disgrace of Byng's retreat wiped away.

It was not in the Old World only that the year of Minden and Quiberon brought glory to the arms of England. In Europe, Pitt had wisely limited his efforts to the support of Prussia, but across the Atlantic the field was wholly his own, and he had no sooner entered office than the desultory raids, which had hitherto been the only resistance to French aggression, were superseded by a large and comprehensive plan of attack. The sympathies of the colonies were won by an order which gave their provincial officers equal rank with the royal officers in the field. They raised at Pitt's call twenty thousand men, and taxed themselves heavily for their support. Three expeditions were simultaneously directed against the French line—one to the Ohio valley, one against Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, while a third under General

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America.

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Amherst and Admiral Boscawen sailed to the mouth of the St. Lawrence. The last was brilliantly successful. Louisberg, though defended by a garrison of five thousand men, was taken with the fleet in its harbour, and the whole province of Cape Breton reduced. The American militia supported the British troops in a vigorous campaign against the forts; and though Montcalm, with a far inferior force, was able to repulse General Abercromby from Ticonderoga, a force from Philadelphia and Virginia, guided and inspired by the courage of George Washington, made itself master of Duquesne. The name of Pittsburg which was given to their new conquest still commemorates the enthusiasm of the colonists for the great Minister who first opened to them the West. The failure at Ticonderoga only spurred Pitt to greater efforts. The colonists again responded to his call with fresh supplies of troops, and Montcalm felt that all was over. The disproportion indeed of strength was enormous. Of regular French troops and Canadians alike he could muster only ten thousand, while his enemies numbered fifty thousand men. The next year (1759) saw Montcalm's previous victory rendered fruitless by the evacuation of Ticonderoga before the advance of Amherst, and by the capture of Fort Niagara after the defeat of an Indian force which marched to its relief. The capture of the three forts was the close of the French effort to bar the advance of the colonists to the valley of the Mississippi, and to place in other than English hands the destinies of North America.

Conquest
of
Canada.

But Pitt had resolved not merely to foil the designs of Montcalm, but to destroy the French rule in America altogether; and while Amherst was breaking through the line of forts, an expedition under General Wolfe entered the St. Lawrence and anchored below Quebec. Wolfe was already a veteran soldier, for he had fought at Dettingen, Fontenoy, and Laffeldt, and had played the first part in the capture of Louisburg. Pitt had discerned the genius and heroism which lay hidden beneath

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the awkward manner and occasional gasconade of the young soldier of thirty-three whom he chose for the crowning exploit of the war. But for a while his sagacity seemed to have failed. No efforts could draw Montcalm from the long line of inaccessible cliffs which borders the river, and for six weeks Wolfe saw his men wasting away in inactivity while he himself lay prostrate with sickness and despair. At last his resolution was fixed, and in a long line of boats the army dropped down the St. Lawrence to a point at the base of the Heights of Abraham, where a narrow path had been discovered to the summit. Not a voice broke the silence of the night save the voice of Wolfe himself, as he quietly repeated the stanzas of Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," remarking as he closed, "I had rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec." But his nature was as brave as it was tender; he was the first to leap on shore and to scale the narrow path where no two men could go abreast. His men followed, pulling themselves to the top by the help of bushes and the crags, and at day-break on the 12th of September the whole army stood in orderly formation before Quebec. Montcalm hastened to attack, though his force, composed chiefly of raw militia, was far inferior in discipline to the English; his onset however was met by a steady fire, and at the first English advance his men gave way. Wolfe headed a charge which broke the French line, but a ball pierced his breast in the moment of victory. "They run," cried an officer who held the dying man in his arms—"I protest they run." Wolfe rallied to ask who they were that ran, and was told "the French." "Then," he murmured, "I die happy!" The fall of Montcalm in the moment of his defeat completed the victory; and the submission of Canada, on the capture of Montreal by Amherst in 1760, put an end to the dream of a French empire in America.

BOOK IX.

MODERN ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

ENGLAND AND ITS EMPIRE.

1760—1767.

NEVER had England played so great a part in the history of mankind as in the year 1759. It was a year of triumphs in every quarter of the world. In September came the news of Minden, and of a victory off Lagos. In October came tidings of the capture of Quebec. November brought word of the French defeat at Quiberon. "We are forced to ask every morning what victory there is," laughed Horace Walpole, "for fear of missing one." But it was not so much in the number as in the importance of its triumphs that the Seven Years' War stood and remains still without a rival. It is no exaggeration to say that three of its many victories determined for ages to come the destinies of mankind. With that of Rossbach began the re-creation of Germany, the revival of its political and intellectual life, the long process of its union under the leadership of Prussia and Prussia's kings. With that of Plassey the influence of Europe told for the first time since the days of Alexander on the nations of the East. The world, in Burke's gorgeous phrase, "saw one of the races of the north-west cast into the heart of Asia new manners, new doctrines, new institutions." With the triumph of Wolfe on the heights of Abraham began the history of the

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England
a World-
Power.

United States. By removing an enemy whose dread had knit the colonists to the mother country, and by breaking through the line with which France had barred them from the basin of the Mississippi, Pitt laid the foundation of the great republic of the west.

Nor were these triumphs less momentous to Britain. The Seven Years' War is in fact a turning point in our national history, as it is a turning point in the history of the world. Till now the relative weight of the European states had been drawn from their possessions within Europe itself. Spain, Portugal, and Holland indeed had won a dominion in other continents; and the wealth which two of these nations had derived from their colonies had given them for a time an influence among their fellow states greater than that which was due to their purely European position. But in the very years during which her rule took firm hold in South America, Spain fell into a decay at home which prevented her empire over sea from telling directly on the balance of power; while the strictly commercial character of the Dutch settlements robbed them of political weight. France in fact was the first state to discern the new road to greatness which lay without European bounds; and the efforts of Dupleix and Montcalm aimed at the building up of an empire which would have lifted her high above her European rivals. The ruin of these hopes in the Seven Years' War was the bitterest humiliation to which French ambition has ever bowed. But it was far from being all that France had to bear. For not only had the genius of Pitt cut her off from the chance of rising into a world-power, and prisoned her again within the limits of a single continent, but it had won for Britain the position that France had lost. From the close of the Seven Years' War it mattered little whether England counted for less or more with the nations around her. She was no longer a mere European power; she was no longer a rival of Germany or France. Her future action lay in a wider sphere than that of Europe. Mistress of Northern America, the future

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mistress of India, claiming as her own the empire of the seas, Britain suddenly towered high above nations whose position in a single continent doomed them to comparative insignificance in the after-history of the world.

It is this that gives William Pitt so unique a position among our statesmen. His figure in fact stands at the opening of a new epoch in English history—in the history not of England only, but of the English race. However dimly and imperfectly, he alone among his fellows saw that the struggle of the Seven Years' War was a struggle of a wholly different order from the struggles that had gone before it. He felt that the stake he was playing for was something vaster than Britain's standing among the powers of Europe. Even while he backed Frederick in Germany, his eye was not on the Weser, but on the Hudson and the St. Lawrence. "If I send an army to Germany," he replied in memorable words to his assailants, "it is because in Germany I can conquer America!" But greater even than Pitt's statesmanship was the conviction on which his statesmanship rested. He believed in Englishmen, and in the might of Englishmen. At a moment when few hoped that England could hold her own among the nations of Europe, he called her not only to face Europe in arms, but to claim an empire far beyond European bounds. His faith, his daring, called the English people to a sense of the destinies that lay before it. And once roused, the sense of these destinies could never be lost. The war indeed was hardly ended when a consciousness of them showed itself in the restlessness with which our seamen penetrated into far-off seas. With England on one side and her American colonies on the other, the Atlantic was dwindling into a mere strait within the British Empire; but beyond it to the westward lay a reach of waters where the British flag was almost unknown. The vast ocean which parts Asia from America had been discovered by a Spaniard and first traversed by a Portuguese; as early indeed as the sixteenth century Spanish settlements spread along its

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eastern shore and a Spanish galleon crossed it year by year from Acapulco to the Philippines. But no effort was made by Spain to explore the lands that broke its wide expanse; and though Dutch voyagers, coming from the eastward, penetrated its waters and first noted the mighty continent that bore from that hour the name of New Holland, no colonists followed in the track of Tasman or Van Diemen. It was not till another century had gone by indeed that Europe again turned her eyes to the Pacific. But in the very year which followed the Peace of Paris, in 1764, two English ships were sent on a cruise of discovery to the Straits of Magellan.

Captain Cook.

"Nothing," ran the instructions of their commander, Commodore Byron, "nothing can redound more to the honour of this nation as a maritime power, to the dignity of the Crown of Great Britain, and to the advancement of the trade and navigation thereof, than to make discoveries of countries hitherto unknown." Byron himself hardly sailed beyond Cape Horn; but three years later a second English seaman, Captain Wallis, succeeded in reaching the central island of the Pacific and in skirting the coral-reefs of Tahiti, and in 1768 a more famous mariner traversed the great ocean from end to end. At first a mere ship-boy on a Whitby collier, James Cook had risen to be an officer in the royal navy, and had piloted the boats in which Wolfe mounted the St. Lawrence to the heights of Abraham. On the return of Wallis he was sent in a small vessel with a crew of some eighty men and a few naturalists to observe the transit of Venus at Tahiti, and to explore the seas that stretched beyond it. After a long stay at Tahiti Cook sailed past the Society Isles into the heart of the Pacific and reached at the further limits of that ocean the two islands, as large as his own Britain, which make up New Zealand. Steering northward from New Zealand over a thousand miles of sea he touched at last the coast of the great "Southern Land" or Australia, on whose eastern shore, from some

fancied likeness to the district at home on which he had gazed as he set sail, he gave the name of New South Wales. In two later voyages Cook traversed the same waters, and discovered fresh island groups in their wide expanse. But his work was more than a work of mere discovery. Wherever he touched, in New Zealand, in Australia, he claimed the soil for the English Crown. The records which he published of his travels not only woke the interest of Englishmen in these far-off islands, in their mighty reaches of deep blue waters, where lands as big as Britain die into mere specks on the huge expanse, in the coral-reefs, the palms, the bread-fruit of Tahiti, the tattooed warriors of New Zealand, the gum-trees and kangaroos of the Southern Continent, but they familiarized them more and more with the sense of possession, with the notion that this strange world of wonders was their own, and that a new earth was open in the Pacific for the expansion of the English race.

Cook in fact pointed out the fitness of New Holland for English settlement; and projects of its occupation, and of the colonization of the Pacific islands by English emigrants, became from that moment, in however vague and imperfect a fashion, the policy of the English crown. Statesmen and people alike indeed felt the change in their country's attitude. Great as Britain seemed to Burke, it was now in itself "but part of a great empire, extended by our virtue and our fortune to the furthest limits of the east and the west." Its parliament no longer looked on itself as the local legislature of England and Scotland; it claimed, in the words of the same great political thinker, "an imperial character, in which as from the throne of heaven she superintends all the several inferior legislatures, and guides and controls them all, without annihilating any." Its people, steeped in the commercial ideas of the time, saw in the growth of such a dominion, the monopoly of whose trade was reserved to the mother-country, a source of boundless wealth. The trade with America alone was,

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in 1772, within less than half a million of being equal to what England carried on with the whole world at the beginning of the century. So rapid had been its growth that since the opening of the eighteenth century it had risen from a value of five hundred thousand pounds to one of six millions, and whereas the colonial trade then formed but a twelfth part of English commerce, it had now mounted to a third. To guard and preserve so vast and lucrative a dominion, to vindicate its integrity alike against outer foes and inner disaffection, to strengthen its unity by drawing closer the bonds, whether commercial or administrative, which linked its various parts to the mother-country, became from this moment not only the aim of British statesmen, but the resolve of the British people.

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and
America.

And at this moment there were grave reasons why this resolve should take an active form. Strong as the attachment of the Americans to Britain seemed at the close of the war, keen lookers-on like the French minister, the Duc de Choiseul, saw in the very completeness of Pitt's triumph a danger to their future union. The presence of the French in Canada, their designs in the west, had thrown America for protection on the mother-country. But with the conquest of Canada all need of protection was removed. The attitude of England towards its distant dependency became one of simple possession; and the differences of temper, the commercial and administrative disputes, which had long existed as elements of severance, but had been thrown into the background till now by the higher need for union, started into a new prominence. Day by day indeed the American colonies found it harder to submit to the meddling of the mother-country with their self-government and their trade. A consciousness of their destinies was stealing in upon thoughtful men, and spread from them to the masses around them. At this very moment the quick growth of population in America moved John Adams, then a village schoolmaster

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of Massachusetts, to lofty forebodings of the future of the great people over whom he was to be called to rule. "Our people in another century," he wrote, "will be more numerous than England itself. All Europe will not be able to subdue us. The only way to keep us from setting up for ourselves is to disunite us." The sense that such an independence was drawing nearer spread even to Europe. "Fools," said a descendant of William Penn, "are always telling their fears that the colonies will set up for themselves." Philosophers however were pretty much of the same mind on this subject with the fools. "Colonies are like fruits," wrote the foreseeing Turgot, "which cling to the tree only till they ripen. As soon as America can take care of itself it will do what Carthage did." But from the thought of separation almost every American turned as yet with horror. The Colonists still looked to England as their home. They prided themselves on their loyalty; and they regarded the difficulties which hindered complete sympathy between the settlements and the mother-country as obstacles which time and good sense could remove. England on the other hand looked on America as her noblest possession. It was the wealth, the growth of this dependency which more than all the victories of her arms was lifting her to a new greatness among the nations. It was the trade with it which had doubled English commerce in half a century. Of the right of the mother-country to monopolize this trade, to deal with this great people as its own possession, no Englishman had a doubt. England, it was held, had planted every colony. It was to England that the Colonists owed not their blood only, but the free institutions under which they had grown to greatness. English arms had rescued them from the Indians, and broken the iron barrier with which France was holding them back from the West. In the war which was drawing to a close England had poured out her blood and gold without stint in her children's cause. Of the debt which

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was mounting to a height unknown before no small part was due to her struggle on behalf of America. And with this sense of obligation mingled a sense of ingratitude. It was generally held that the wealthy Colonists should do something to lighten the load of this debt from the shoulders of the mother-country. But it was known that all proposals for American taxation would be bitterly resisted. The monopoly of American trade was looked on as a part of an Englishman's birthright. Yet the Colonists not only murmured at this monopoly but evaded it in great part by a wide system of smuggling. And behind all these grievances lay an uneasy sense of dread at the democratic form which the government and society of the colonies had taken. The governors sent from England wrote back words of honest surprise and terror at the "levelling principles" of the men about them. To statesmen at home the temper of the colonial legislatures, their protests, their bickerings with the governors and with the Board of Trade, the constant refusal of supplies when their remonstrances were set aside, seemed all but republican.

George
the
Third.

To check this republican spirit, to crush all dreams of severance, and to strengthen the unity of the British Empire by drawing closer the fiscal and administrative bonds which linked the colonies to the mother-country, was one of the chief aims with which George the Third mounted the throne on the death of his grandfather George the Second, in 1760. But it was far from being his only aim. For the first and last time since the accession of the House of Hanover England saw a King who was resolved to play a part in English politics; and the part which George succeeded in playing was undoubtedly a memorable one. During the first ten years of his reign he managed to reduce government to a shadow, and to turn the loyalty of his subjects at home into disaffection. Before twenty years were over he had forced the American colonies into revolt and independence, and brought England to what then seemed the brink of ruin. Work such as this has

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sometimes been done by very great men, and often by very wicked and profligate men; but George was neither profligate nor great. He had a smaller mind than any English king before him save James the Second. He was wretchedly educated, and his natural powers were of the meanest sort. Nor had he the capacity for using greater minds than his own by which some sovereigns have concealed their natural littleness. On the contrary, his only feeling towards great men was one of jealousy and hate. He longed for the time when "decrepitude or death" might put an end to Pitt; and even when death had freed him from "this trumpet of sedition," he denounced the proposal for a public monument to the great statesman as "an offensive measure to me personally." But dull and petty as his temper was, he was clear as to his purpose and obstinate in the pursuit of it. And his purpose was to rule. "George," his mother, the Princess of Wales, had continually repeated to him in youth, "George, be king." He called himself always "a Whig of the Revolution," and he had no wish to undo the work which he believed the Revolution to have done. But he looked on the subjection of his two predecessors to the will of their ministers as no real part of the work of the Revolution, but as a usurpation of that authority which the Revolution had left to the crown. And to this usurpation he was determined not to submit. His resolve was to govern, not to govern against law, but simply to govern, to be freed from the dictation of parties and ministers, and to be in effect the first minister of the State.

How utterly incompatible such a dream was with the Parliamentary constitution of the country as it had received its final form from Sunderland it is easy to see; and the effort of the young king to realize it plunged England at once into a chaos of political and social disorder which makes the first years of his reign the most painful and humiliating period in our history. It is with an angry disgust that we pass from the triumphs of the

Import-
ance of his
action.

CHAP. I. Seven Years' War to the miserable strife of Whig factions with one another or of the whole Whig party with the King. But wearisome as the story is, it is hardly less important than that of the rise of England into a world-power. In the strife of these wretched years began a political revolution which is still far from having reached its close. Side by side with the gradual development of the English Empire and of the English race has gone on, through the century that has passed since the close of the Seven Years' War, the transfer of power within England itself from a governing class to the nation as a whole. If the effort of George failed to restore the power of the Crown, it broke the power which impeded the advance of the people itself to political supremacy. Whilst labouring to convert the aristocratic monarchy of which he found himself the head into a personal sovereignty, the irony of fate doomed him to take the first step in an organic change which has converted that aristocratic monarchy into a democratic republic, ruled under monarchical forms.

*The
Revolution
and
the nation.*

To realize however the true character of the King's attempt we must recall for a moment the issue of the Revolution on which he claimed to take his stand. It had no doubt given personal and religious liberty to England at large. But its political benefits seemed as yet to be less equally shared. The Parliament indeed had become supreme, and in theory the Parliament was a representative of the whole English people. But in actual fact the bulk of the English people found itself powerless to control the course of English government. We have seen how at the very moment of its triumph opinion had been paralyzed by the results of the Revolution. The sentiment of the bulk of Englishmen remained Tory, but the existence of a Stuart Pretender forced on them a system of government which was practically Whig. Under William and Anne they had tried to reconcile Toryism with the Revolution; but this effort ended with the accession of the House of Hanover,

and the bulk of the landed classes and the clergy withdrew in a sulk from all permanent contact with politics. Their hatred of the system to which they bowed showed itself in the violence of their occasional outbreaks, in riots over the Excise Bill, in cries for a Spanish war, in the frenzy against Walpole. Whenever it roused itself, the national will showed its old power to destroy; but it remained impotent to create any new system of administrative action. It could aid one clique of Whigs to destroy another clique of Whigs, but it could do nothing to interrupt the general course of Whig administration. Walpole and Pelham were alike the representatives of a minority of the nation; but the minority which they represented knew its mind and how to carry out its mind, while the majority of the people remained helpless and distracted between their hatred of the House of Hanover and their dread of the consequences which would follow on a return of the Stuarts.

The results of such a divorce between the government and that general mass of national sentiment on which a government can alone safely ground itself at once made themselves felt. Robbed as it was of all practical power, and thus stripped of the feeling of responsibility which the consciousness of power carries with it, among the mass of Englishmen public opinion became ignorant and indifferent to the general progress of the age, but at the same time violent and mutinous, hostile to Government because it was Government, disloyal to the Crown, averse from Parliament. For the first and last time in our history Parliament was unpopular, and its opponents secure of popularity. But the results on the governing class were even more fatal to any right conduct of public affairs. Not only had the mass of national sentiment been so utterly estranged from Parliament by the withdrawal of the Tories that the people had lost all trust in it as an expression of their will, but the Parliament did not pretend to express it. It was conscious that for half a century it had

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not been really a representative of the nation, that it had represented a minority, wiser no doubt than their fellow countrymen, but still a minority of Englishmen. At the same time it saw, and saw with a just pride, that its policy had as a whole been for the nation's good, that it had given political and religious freedom to the people in the very teeth of their political and religious bigotry, that in spite of their narrow insularism it had made Britain the greatest of European powers. The sense of both these aspects of Parliament had sunk in fact so deeply into the mind of the Whigs as to become a theory of Parliamentary government. They were never weary of expressing their contempt for public opinion. They shrank with instinctive dislike from Pitt's appeals to national feeling, and from the popularity which rewarded them. They denied that members of the Commons sat as representatives of the people, and they shrank with actual panic from the thought of any change which could render them representatives. To a Whig such a change meant the overthrow of the work done in 1688, the coercion of the minority of sound political thinkers by the mass of opinion, so brutal and unintelligent, so bigoted in its views both of Church and State, which had been content to reap the benefits of the Revolution while vilifying and opposing its principles.

*Need of
Parliamentary
reform.*

And yet, if representation was to be more than a name, the very relation of Parliament to the constituencies made some change in its composition a necessity. That changes in the distribution of seats in the House of Commons were called for by the natural shiftings of population and wealth which had gone on since the days of Edward the First had been recognized as early as the Civil Wars. But the reforms of the Long Parliament were cancelled at the Restoration; and from the time of Charles the Second to that of George the Third not a single effort had been made to meet the growing abuses of our parliamentary system. Great towns like Manchester or Birmingham remained without a member, while members still sat for

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boroughs which, like Old Sarum, had actually vanished from the face of the earth. The effort of the Tudor sovereigns to establish a Court party in the House by a profuse creation of boroughs, most of which were mere villages then in the hands of the Crown, had ended in the appropriation of these seats by the neighbouring landowners, who bought and sold them as they bought and sold their own estates. Even in towns which had a real claim to representation the narrowing of municipal privileges ever since the fourteenth century to a small part of the inhabitants, and in many cases the restriction of electoral rights to the members of the governing corporation, rendered their representation a mere name. The choice of such places hung simply on the purse or influence of politicians. Some were "the King's boroughs," others obediently returned nominees of the Ministry of the day, others were "close boroughs" in the hands of jobbers like the Duke of Newcastle, who at one time returned a third of all the borough members in the House. The counties and the great commercial towns could alone be said to exercise any real right of suffrage, though the enormous expense of contesting such constituencies practically left their representation in the hands of the great local families. But even in the counties the suffrage was ridiculously limited and unequal. Out of a population of eight millions of English people, only a hundred and sixty thousand were electors at all.

"The value, spirit, and essence of a House of Commons," said Burke, in noble words, "consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation." But how far such a House as that, which now existed was from really representing English opinion we see from the fact that in the height of his popularity Pitt himself could hardly find a seat in it. Purchase was becoming more and more the means of entering Parliament; and seats were bought and sold in the open market at a price which rose to four thousand pounds. We can hardly wonder that a reformer

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could allege without a chance of denial, "This House is not a representative of the people of Great Britain. It is the representative of nominal boroughs, of ruined and exterminated towns, of noble families, of wealthy individuals, of foreign potentates." The meanest motives naturally told on a body returned by such constituencies, cut off from the influence of public opinion by the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, and yet invested with almost boundless authority. Walpole and Newcastle had in fact made bribery and borough-jobbing the base of their power. But bribery and borough-jobbing were every day becoming more offensive to the nation at large. A new moral consciousness, as we have seen in the movement of the Wesleys, was diffusing itself through England; and behind this moral consciousness came a general advance in the national intelligence, which could not fail to tell vigorously on politics.

The intel-
lectual
advance.

Ever since the expulsion of the Stuarts an intellectual revolution had been silently going on in the people at large. The close of the seventeenth century was marked by a sudden extension of the world of readers. The development of men's minds under the political and social changes of the day, as well as the rapid increase of wealth, and the advance in culture and refinement which accompanies an increase of wealth, were quickening the general intelligence of the people at large; and the wider demand for books to read that came of this quickening gave a new extension and vigour to their sale. Addison tells us how large and rapid was the sale of his "Spectator;" and the sale of Shakspeare's works shows the amazing effect of the new passion for literature on the diffusion of our older authors. Four issues of his plays in folio, none of them probably exceeding five hundred copies, had sufficed to meet the wants of the seventeenth century. But through the eighteenth ten editions at least followed each other in quick succession; and before the century was over as many as thirty thousand copies of Shakspeare were dispersed throughout England.

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Reprints of older works however were far from being the only need of English readers. The new demand created an organ for its supply in the publisher, and through the publisher literature became a profession by which men might win their bread. That such a change was a healthy one, time was to show. But in spite of such instances as Dryden, at the moment of the change its main result seemed the degradation of letters. The intellectual demand for the moment outran the intellectual supply. The reader called for the writer; but the temper of the time, the diversion of its mental energy to industrial pursuits, the influences which tended to lower its poetic and imaginative aspirations, were not such as to bring great writers rapidly to the front. On the other hand, the new opening which letters afforded for a livelihood was such as to tempt every scribbler who could handle a pen; and authors of this sort were soon set to hack-work by the Curles and the Tonsons who looked on book-making as a mere business. The result was a mob of authors in garrets, of illiterate drudges as poor as they were thriftless and debauched, selling their pen to any buyer, hawking their flatteries and their libels from door to door, fawning on the patron and the publisher for very bread, tagging rimes which they called poetry, or abuse which they called criticism, vamping up compilations and abridgements under the guise of history, or filling the journals with empty rhetoric in the name of politics.

It was on such a literary chaos as this that the one great poet of the time poured scorn in his "Dunciad." Pope was a child of the Revolution; for he was born in 1688, and he died at the moment when the spirit of his age was passing into larger and grander forms in 1744. But from all active contact with the world of his day he stood utterly apart. He was the son of a Catholic linen-draper, who had withdrawn from his business in Lombard Street to a retirement on the skirts of Windsor Forest; and there amidst the stormy years which followed William's accession the boy

Pope.

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grew up in an atmosphere of poetry, buried in the study of the older English singers, stealing to London for a peep at Dryden in his arm-chair at Wills's, himself already lisping in numbers, and busy with an epic at the age of twelve. Pope's latter years were as secluded as his youth. His life, as Johnson says, was "a long disease;" his puny frame, his crooked figure, the feebleness of his health, his keen sensitiveness to pain, whether of mind or body, cut him off from the larger world of men, and doomed him to the faults of a morbid temperament. To the last he remained vain, selfish, affected; he loved small intrigues and petty lying; he was incredibly jealous and touchy; he dwelt on the fouler aspect of things with an unhealthy pruriency; he stung right and left with a malignant venom. But nobler qualities rose out of this morbid undergrowth of faults. If Pope was quickly moved to anger, he was as quickly moved to tears; though every literary gnat could sting him to passion, he could never read the lament of Priam over Hector without weeping. His sympathies lay indeed within a narrow range, but within that range they were vivid and intense; he clung passionately to the few he loved; he took their cause for his own; he flung himself almost blindly into their enthusiasms and their hates. But loyal as he was to his friends, he was yet more loyal to his verse. His vanity never led him to literary self-sufficiency; no artist ever showed a truer lowliness before the ideal of his art; no poet ever corrected so much, or so invariably bettered his work by each correction. One of his finest characteristics, indeed, was his high sense of literary dignity. From the first he carried on the work of Dryden by claiming a worth and independence for literature; and he broke with disdain through the traditions of patronage which had degraded men of letters into hangers-on of the great.

*The
Dunciad.*

With aims and conceptions such as these, Pope looked bitterly out on the phase of transition through which English letters were passing. As yet his poetic works had shown little of the keen and ardent temper that lay within

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him. The promise of his spring was not that of a satirist but of the brightest and most genial of verse writers. When after some fanciful preludes his genius found full utterance in 1712, it was in the "Rape of the Lock;" and the "Rape of the Lock" was a poetic counterpart of the work of the Essayists. If we miss in it the personal and intimate charm of Addison, or the freshness and pathos of Steele, it passes far beyond the work of both in the brilliancy of its wit, in the lightness and buoyancy of its tone, in its atmosphere of fancy, its glancing colour, its exquisite verse, its irresistible gaiety. The poem remains Pope's master-piece; it is impossible to read it without feeling that his mastery lay in social and fanciful verse, and that he missed his poetic path when he laid down the humourist for the philosopher and the critic. But the state of letters presented an irresistible temptation to criticism. All Pope's nobler feelings of loyalty to his art revolted from the degradation of letters which he saw about him: and after an interval of hack-work in a translation of Homer he revealed his terrible power of sarcasm in his poem of the "Dunciad." The poem is disfigured by mere outbursts of personal spleen, and in its later form by attacks on men whose last fault was dulness. But in the main the "Dunciad" was a noble vindication of literature from the herd of dullards and dunces that had usurped its name, a protest against the claims of the journalist or pamphleteer, of the compiler of facts and dates, or the grubber among archives, to the rank of men of letters.

That there was work and useful work for such men to do, Pope would not have denied. It was when their pretensions threatened the very existence of literature as an art, when the sense that the writer's work was the work of an artist, and like an artist's work must show largeness of design, and grace of form, and fitness of phrase, was either denied or forgotten, it was when every rimer was claiming to be a poet, every fault-finder a critic, every chronicler an historian, that Pope struck at the herd of book-makers and swept them from the path of letters.

*Revival
of
Letters.*

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 England and its Empire. needed now, as it was true and needed then. But it
 1760-1767. had hardly been uttered when the chaos settled itself, and
 the intellectual impulse which had as yet been felt mainly
 in the demand for literature showed itself in its supply.
 Even before the "Dunciad" was completed a great
 school of novelists was rising into fame; and the years
 which elapsed between the death of Pope in 1744 and
 that of George the Second in 1760 were filled with the
 master-pieces of Richardson, Smollett, and Fielding.
 Their appearance was but a prelude of a great literary
 revival which marked the closing years of the eighteenth
 century. But the instant popularity of "Clarissa" and
 "Tom Jones" showed the work of intellectual preparation
 which had been going on through Walpole's days in the
 people at large; and it was inevitable that such a quick-
 ening of intelligence should tell on English politics. The
 very vulgarization of letters indeed, the broadsheets and
 pamphlets and catch-penny magazines of Grub-street, were
 doing for the mass of the people a work which greater
 writers could hardly have done. Above all the rapid
 extension of journalism had begun to give opinion a new
 information and consistency. In spite of the removal of
 the censorship after the Revolution the press had been
 slow to attain any political influence. Under the first two
 Georges its progress had been hindered by the absence of
 great topics for discussion, the worthlessness of the writers,
 and above all the lethargy of the time. But at the moment
 of George the Third's accession the impulse which Pitt
 had given to the national spirit, and the rise of a keener
 interest in politics, was fast raising the press into an intel-
 lectual and political power. Not only was the number
 of London newspapers fast increasing, but journals were
 being established in almost every considerable town.

Return
 of the
 Tories.

With impulses such as these telling every day on it
 more powerfully, roused as it was too into action by the
 larger policy of Pitt, and emboldened at once by the sense

of growing wealth and of military triumph, it is clear that
 the nation must soon have passed from its old inaction to
 claim its part in the direction of public affairs. The very
 position of Pitt, forced as he had been into office by the
 sheer force of opinion in the teeth of party obstacles,
 showed the rise of a new energy in the mass of the people.
 It showed that a king who enlisted the national sentiment
 on his side would have little trouble in dealing with the
 Whigs. George indeed had no thought of such a policy.
 His aim was not to control the Parliament by the force of
 national opinion, but simply to win over the Parliament
 to his side, and through it to govern the nation with
 as little regard to its opinion as of old. But whether
 he would or no, the drift of opinion aided him. Though
 the policy of Walpole had ruined Jacobitism, it long
 remained unconscious of its ruin. But when a Jacobite
 prince stood in the heart of the realm, and not a Jacobite
 answered his call, the spell of Jacobitism was broken;
 and the later degradation of Charles Edward's life wore
 finally away the thin coating of disloyalty which clung
 to the clergy and the squires. They were ready again
 to take part in politics, and in the accession of a king
 who unlike his two predecessors was no stranger but an
 Englishman, who had been born in England and spoke
 English, they found the opportunity they desired. From
 the opening of the reign Tories gradually appeared again
 at court.

It was only slowly indeed that the party as a whole
 swung round to a steady support of the Government;
 and in the nation at large the old Toryism was still for
 some years to show itself in opposition to the Crown.
 But from the first the Tory nobles and gentry came in
 one by one; and their action told at once on the com-
 plexion of English politics. Their withdrawal from public
 affairs had left them untouched by the progress of poli-
 tical ideas since the Revolution of 1688, and when they
 returned to political life it was to invest the new sovereign

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with all the reverence which they had bestowed on the Stuarts. In this return of the Tories therefore a "King's party" was ready made to his hand; but George was able to strengthen it by a vigorous exertion of the power and influence which was still left to the Crown. All promotion in the Church, all advancement in the army, a great number of places in the civil administration and about the court, were still at the King's disposal. If this vast mass of patronage had been practically usurped by the ministers of his predecessors, it was resumed and firmly held by George the Third; and the character of the House of Commons made patronage a powerful engine in its management. George had one of Walpole's weapons in his hands, and he used it with unscrupulous energy to break up the party which Walpole had held so long together. The Whigs were still indeed a great power. "Long possession of government, vast property, obligations of favours given and received, connexion of office, ties of blood, of alliance, of friendship, the name of Whigs dear to the majority of the people, the zeal early begun and steadily continued to the royal family, all these together," says Burke justly, "formed a body of power in the nation." But George the Third saw that the Whigs were divided among themselves by the factious spirit which springs from a long hold of office, and that they were weakened by the rising contempt with which the country at large regarded the selfishness and corruption of its representatives.

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More than thirty years before, the statesmen of the day had figured on the stage as highwaymen and pickpockets. And now that statesmen were represented by hoary jobbers such as Newcastle, the public contempt was fiercer than ever, and men turned sickened from the intrigues and corruption of party to a young sovereign who aired himself in a character which Bolingbroke had invented, as a Patriot King. Had Pitt and Newcastle held together indeed, supported as the one was by the commercial classes, the other by the Whig families and the whole machinery of Parliamentary

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management, George must have struggled in vain. But the ministry was already disunited. The bulk of the party drew day by day further from Pitt. Attached as they were to peace by the traditions of Walpole, dismayed at the enormous expenditure, and haughty with the pride of a ruling oligarchy, the Whigs were in silent revolt against the war and the supremacy of the Great Commoner. It was against their will that he rejected proposals of peace from France which would have secured to England all her conquests on the terms of a desertion of Prussia, and that his steady support enabled Frederick still to hold out against the terrible exhaustion of an unequal struggle. The campaign of 1760 indeed was one of the grandest efforts of Frederick's genius. Foiled in an attempt on Dresden, he again saved Silesia by a victory at Liegnitz and hurled back an advance of Daun by a victory at Torgau: while Ferdinand of Brunswick held his ground as of old along the Weser. But even victories drained Frederick's strength. Men and money alike failed him. It was impossible for him to strike another great blow, and the ring of enemies again closed slowly round him. His one remaining hope lay in the support of Pitt, and triumphant as his policy had been, Pitt was tottering to his fall.

The envy and resentment of the minister's colleagues at his undisguised supremacy gave the young King an easy means of realizing his schemes. George had hardly mounted the throne when he made his influence felt in the ministry by forcing it to accept a Court favourite, the Earl of Bute, as Secretary of State. Bute had long been his counsellor, and though his temper and abilities were those of a gentleman usher, he was forced into the Cabinet. The new drift of affairs was seen in the instant desertion from Pitt of the two ablest of his adherents, George Grenville and Charles Townshend, who attached themselves from this moment to the rising favourite. It was seen yet more when Bute pressed for peace. As Bute was known to be

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his master's mouthpiece, a peace party at once appeared in the Cabinet itself, and it was only a majority of one that approved Pitt's refusal to negotiate with France. "He is madder than ever," was Bute's comment on this refusal in his correspondence with the King; "he has no thought of abandoning the Continent." Conscious indeed as he was of the King's temper and of the temper of his colleagues, Pitt showed no signs of giving way. So far was he from any thought of peace that he proposed at this moment a vast extension of the war. In 1761 he learned the signature of a treaty which brought into force the Family Compact between the Courts of Paris and Madrid, and of a special convention which bound the last to declare war on England at the close of the year. Pitt proposed to anticipate the blow by an instant seizure of the treasure fleet which was on its way from the Indies to Cadiz, and for whose safe arrival alone the Spanish Court was deferring its action. He would have followed up the blow by occupying the Isthmus of Panama, and by an attack on the Spanish dominions in the New World. It was almost with exultation that he saw the danger which had threatened her ever since the Peace of Utrecht break at last upon England. His proud sense of the national strength never let him doubt for a moment of her triumph over the foes that had leagued against her. "This is the moment," he exclaimed to his colleagues, "for humbling the whole House of Bourbon." But the Cabinet shrank from plans so vast and daring; and the Duke of Newcastle, who had never forgiven Pitt for forcing himself into power and for excluding him from the real control of affairs, was backed in his resistance by the bulk of the Whigs. The King openly supported them, and Pitt with his brother-in-law Lord Temple found themselves alone. Pitt did not blind himself to the real character of the struggle. The question, as he felt, was not merely one of peace or war, it was whether the new force of opinion which had borne him into office and kept him there was to govern England or no. It was this which

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made him stake all on the decision of the Cabinet. "If I cannot in this instance prevail," he ended his appeal, "this shall be the last time I will sit in the Council. Called to office by the voice of the people, to whom I conceive myself accountable for my conduct, I will not remain in a situation which renders me responsible for measures I am no longer allowed to guide." His proposals were rejected; and the resignation of his post, which followed in October 1761, changed the face of European affairs.

"Pitt disgraced!" wrote a French philosopher, "it is worth two victories to us!" Frederick on the other hand was almost driven to despair. But George saw in the removal of his powerful minister an opening for the realization of his long-cherished plans. The Whigs had looked on Pitt's retirement as the restoration of their rule, unbroken by the popular forces to which it had been driven during his ministry to bow. His declaration that he had been "called to office by the voice of the people, to whom I conceive myself accountable" had been met with indignant scorn by his fellow-ministers. "When the gentleman talks of being responsible to the people," retorted Lord Granville, the Lord Carteret of earlier days, "he talks the language of the House of Commons, and forgets that at this board he is only responsible to the King." But his appeal was heard by the people at large. When the dismissed statesman went to Guildhall the Londoners hung on his carriage wheels, hugged his footmen, and even kissed his horses. Their break with Pitt was in fact the death-blow of the Whigs. In betraying him to the King they had only put themselves in George's power; and so great was the unpopularity of the ministry that the King was able to deliver his longed-for stroke at a party that he hated even more than Pitt. Newcastle found he had freed himself from the great statesman only to be driven from office by a series of studied mortifications from his young master; and the more powerful of his Whig colleagues followed him into retirement. George saw himself triumphant over

*George
breaks
with the
Whigs.*

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Bute took office simply as an agent of the King's will; and the first resolve of George the Third was to end the war. In the spring of 1762 Frederick, who still held his ground stubbornly against fate, was brought to the brink of ruin by a withdrawal of the English subsidies; it was in fact only his dogged resolution and a sudden change in the policy of Russia, which followed on the death of his enemy the Czarina Elizabeth, that enabled him at last to retire from the struggle in the Treaty of Hubertsberg without the loss of an inch of territory. George and Lord Bute had already purchased peace at a very different price. With a shameless indifference to the national honour they not only deserted Frederick but they offered to negotiate a peace for him on the basis of a cession of Silesia to Maria Theresa and East Prussia to the Czarina. The issue of the strife with Spain saved England from humiliation such as this. Pitt's policy of instant attack had been justified by a Spanish declaration of war three weeks after his fall; and the year 1762 saw triumphs which vindicated his confidence in the issue of the new struggle. Martinico, the strongest and wealthiest of the French West Indian possessions, was conquered at the opening of the year, and its conquest was followed by those of Grenada, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent. In the summer the reduction of Havana brought with it the gain of the rich Spanish colony of Cuba. The Philippines, the wealthiest of the Spanish colonies in the Pacific, yielded to a British fleet. It was these losses that brought about the Peace of Paris in September 1762. So eager was Bute to end the war that he bought peace by restoring all that the last year's triumphs had given him. In Europe he contented himself with the recovery of Minorca, while he restored Martinico to

France, and Cuba and the Philippines to Spain. The real gains of Britain were in India and America. In the first the French abandoned all right to any military settlement. From the second they wholly withdrew. To England they gave up Canada, Nova Scotia and Louisiana as far as the Mississippi, while they resigned the rest of that province to Spain, in compensation for its surrender of Florida to the British Crown.

We have already seen how mighty a change in the aspect of the world, and above all in the aspect of Britain, was marked by this momentous treaty. But no sense of its great issues influenced the young King in pressing for its conclusion. His eye was fixed not so much on Europe or the British Empire as on the petty game of politics which he was playing with the Whigs. The anxiety which he showed for peace abroad sprang mainly from his belief that peace was needful for success in his struggle for power at home. So long as the war lasted Pitt's return to office and the union of the Whigs under his guidance was an hourly danger. But with peace the King's hands were free. He could count on the dissensions of the Whigs, on the new-born loyalty of the Tories, on the influence of the Crown patronage which he had taken into his own hands. But what he counted on most of all was the character of the House of Commons. So long as matters went quietly, so long as no gust of popular passion or enthusiasm forced its members to bow for a while to outer opinion, he saw that "management" could make the House a mere organ of his will. George had discovered—to use Lord Bute's words—"that the forms of a free and the ends of an arbitrary government were things not altogether incompatible." At a time when it had become all-powerful in the State, the House of Commons had ceased in any real and effective sense to be a representative body at all; and its isolation from the general opinion of the country left it at ordinary moments amenable only to selfish influences. The Whigs had managed it by bribery and borough-jobbing, and George in his turn

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seized bribery and borough-jobbing as a base of the power he proposed to give to the Crown. The royal revenue was employed to buy seats and to buy votes. Day by day the young sovereign scrutinized the voting-list of the two Houses, and distributed rewards and punishments as members voted according to his will or no. Promotion in the civil service, preferment in the Church, rank in the army, was reserved for "the King's friends." Pensions and court places were used to influence debates. Bribery was employed on a scale never known before. Under Bute's ministry an office was opened at the Treasury for the purchase of members, and twenty-five thousand pounds are said to have been spent in a single day.

George
III. and
America.

The result of these measures was soon seen in the tone of the Parliament. Till now it had bowed beneath the greatness of Pitt; but in the teeth of his denunciation the provisions of the Peace of Paris were approved by a majority of five to one. It was seen still more in the vigour with which George and his minister prepared to carry out the plans over which they had brooded for the regulation of America. The American question was indeed forced on them, as they pleaded, by the state of the revenue. Pitt had waged war with characteristic profusion, and he had defrayed the cost of the war by enormous loans. The public debt now stood at a hundred and forty millions. The first need therefore which met Bute after the conclusion of the Peace of Paris was that of making provision for the new burthens which the nation had incurred, and as these had been partly incurred in the defence of the American Colonies it was the general opinion of Englishmen that the Colonies should bear a share of them. In this opinion Bute and the King concurred. But their plans went further than mere taxation. The amount indeed which was expected to be raised as revenue by these changes, at most two hundred thousand pounds, was far too small to give much relief to the financial pressure at home. But this revenue furnished an easy pretext for wider

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changes. Plans for the regulation of the government of the Colonies had been suggested from time to time by subordinate ministers, but they had been set aside alike by the prudence of Walpole and the generosity of Pitt. The appointment of Charles Townshend to the Presidency of the Board of Trade however was a sign that Bute had adopted a policy not only of taxation, but of restraint. The new minister declared himself resolved on a rigorous execution of the Navigation laws, laws by which a monopoly of American trade was secured to the mother-country, on the raising of a revenue within the Colonies for the discharge of the debt, and above all on impressing upon the colonists a sense of their dependence upon Britain. The direct trade between America and the French or Spanish West Indian Islands had hitherto been fettered by prohibitory duties, but these had been easily evaded by a general system of smuggling. The duties were now reduced, but the reduced duties were rigorously exacted, and a considerable naval force was despatched to the American coast by Grenville, who stood at the head of the Admiralty Board, with a view of suppressing the clandestine trade with the foreigner. The revenue which was expected from this measure was to be supplemented by an internal Stamp Tax, a tax on all legal documents issued within the Colonies, the plan of which seems to have originated with Bute's secretary, Jenkinson, afterwards the first Lord Liverpool. That resistance was expected was seen in a significant step which was taken by the ministry at the end of the war. Though the defeat of the French had left the Colonies without an enemy save the Indians, a force of ten thousand men was still kept quartered on their inhabitants, and a scheme was broached for an extension of the province of Canada over the district round the Lakes, which would have turned the western lands into a military settlement, governed at the will of the Crown, and have furnished a base of warlike operations, if such were needed, against the settled Colonies on the Atlantic.

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Had Bute's power lasted it is probable that these measures would have brought about the struggle between England and America long before it actually began. Fortunately for the two countries the minister found himself from the first the object of a sudden and universal hatred. The great majority which had rejected Pitt's motion against the Peace had filled the court with exultation. "Now indeed," cried the Princess Dowager, "my son is king." But the victory was hardly won when King and minister found themselves battling with a storm of popular ill will such as never since the overthrow of the Stuarts assailed the throne. Violent and reckless as it was, the storm only marked a fresh advance in the re-awakening of public opinion. The bulk of the higher classes who had till now stood apart from government were coming gradually in to the side of the Crown. But the mass of the people was only puzzled and galled by the turn of events. It felt itself called again to political activity, but it saw nothing to change its hatred and distrust of Parliament and the Crown. On the contrary it saw them in greater union than of old. The House of Commons was more corrupt than ever, and it was the slave of the King. The King still called himself a Whig, yet he was reviving a system of absolutism which Whiggism, to do it justice, had long made impossible. His minister was a mere favourite and in Englishmen's eyes a foreigner. The masses saw all this, but they saw no way of mending it. They knew little of their own strength, and they had no means of influencing the Government they hated save by sheer violence. They came therefore to the front with their old national and religious bigotry, their long-nursed dislike of the Hanoverian Court, their long-nursed habits of violence and faction, their long-nursed hatred of Parliament, but with no means of expressing them save riot and uproar.

Wilkes.

It was this temper of the masses which was seized and turned to his purpose by John Wilkes. Wilkes was a worthless profligate; but he had a remarkable faculty of

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enlisting popular sympathy on his side; and by a singular irony of fortune he became in the end the chief instrument in bringing about three of the greatest advances which our Constitution has made. He woke the nation to a sense of the need for Parliamentary reform by his defence of the rights of constituencies against the despotism of the House of Commons. He took the lead in a struggle which put an end to the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings. He was the first to establish the right of the press to discuss public affairs. But in his attack upon the Ministry of Lord Bute he served simply as an organ of the general excitement and discontent. The bulk of the Tories were on fire to gratify their old grudge against the Crown and its Ministers. The body of the Whigs, and the commercial classes who backed them, were startled and angered by the dismissal of Pitt, and by the revolt of the Crown against the Whig system. The nation as a whole was uneasy and alarmed at the sudden break up of political tranquillity, and by the sense of a coming struggle between opponents of whom as yet neither had fully its sympathies. There were mobs, riots, bonfires in the streets, and disturbances which culminated—in a rough spirit of punning upon the name of the minister—in the solemn burning of a jack-boot. The journals, which were now becoming numerous, made themselves organs for this outburst of popular hatred; and it was in the *North-Briton* that Wilkes took a lead in the movement by denouncing the Cabinet and the peace with peculiar bitterness, by playing on the popular jealousy of foreigners and Scotchmen, and by venturing to denounce the hated minister by name.

Ignorant and brutal as was the movement which Wilkes headed, it was a revival of public opinion; and though the time was to come when the influence of opinion would be exercised more wisely, even now it told for good. It was the attack of Wilkes which more than all else determined Bute to withdraw from office in 1763 as a means of allay-

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ing the storm of popular indignation. But the King was made of more stubborn stuff than his minister. If he suffered his favourite to resign he still regarded him as the real head of administration; for the ministry which Bute left behind him consisted simply of the more courtly of his colleagues, and was in fact formed under his direction. George Grenville was its nominal chief, but the measures of the cabinet were still secretly dictated by the favourite. The formation of the Grenville ministry indeed was laughed at as a joke. Charles Townshend and the Duke of Bedford, the two ablest of the Whigs who had remained with Bute after Newcastle's dismissal, refused to join it; and its one man of ability was Lord Shelburne, a young Irishman, who had served with credit at Minden, and had been rewarded by a post at Court which brought him into terms of intimacy with the young sovereign and Bute. Dislike of the Whig oligarchy and of the war had thrown Shelburne strongly into the opposition to Pitt, and his diplomatic talents were of service in securing recruits for his party, as his eloquence had been useful in advocating the peace; but it was not till he himself retired from office that Bute obtained for his supporter the Presidency of the Board of Trade. As yet however Shelburne's powers were little known, and he added nothing to the strength of the ministry. It was in fact only the disunion of its opponents which allowed it to hold its ground. Townshend and Bedford remained apart from the main body of the Whigs, and both sections held aloof from Pitt. George had counted on the divisions of the opposition in forming such a ministry; and he counted on the weakness of the ministry to make it the creature of his will.

— George
Grenville.

But Grenville had no mind to be a puppet either of the King or of Bute. Narrow and pedantic as he was, severed by sheer jealousy and ambition from his kinsman Pitt and the bulk of the Whigs, his temper was too proud to stoop to the position which George designed for him. The conflicts between the King and his

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minister soon became so bitter that in August, 1763, George appealed in despair to Pitt to form a ministry. Never had Pitt shown a nobler patriotism or a grander self-command than in the reception he gave to this appeal. He set aside all resentment at his own expulsion from office by Newcastle and the Whigs, and made the return to office of the whole party, with the exception of Bedford, a condition of his own. His aim, in other words, was to restore constitutional government by a reconstruction of the ministry which had won the triumphs of the Seven Years' War. But it was the destruction of this ministry and the erection of a kingly government in its place on which George prided himself most. To restore it was, in his belief, to restore the tyranny under which the Whigs had so long held the crown. "Rather than submit," he cried, "to the terms proposed by Mr. Pitt, I would die in the room I now stand in." The result left Grenville as powerful as he had been weak. Bute retired into the country and ceased to exercise any political influence. Shelburne, the one statesman in the ministry, and who had borne a chief part in the negotiations for the formation of a new cabinet, resigned to follow Pitt. On the other hand, Bedford, irritated by Pitt's exclusion of him from his proposed ministry, joined Grenville with his whole party, and the ministry thus became strong and compact.

Grenville himself was ploddingly industrious and not without financial ability. But his mind was narrow and pedantic in its tone; and honest as was his belief in his own Whig creed, he saw nothing beyond legal forms. He was resolute to withstand the people as he had withstood the Crown. His one standard of conduct was the approval of Parliament; his one aim to enforce the supremacy of Parliament over subject as over King. With such an aim as this, it was inevitable that Grenville should strike fiercely at the new force of opinion which had just shown its power in the fall of Bute. He was resolved to see public opinion only in the voice of

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Parliament; and his resolve led at once to a contest with Wilkes as with the press. It was in the press that the nation was finding a court of appeal from the Houses of Parliament. The popularity of the *North-Briton* made Wilkes the representative of the new journalism, as he was the representative of that mass of general sentiment of which it was beginning to be the mouth-piece; and the fall of Bute had shown how real a power lay behind the agitator's diatribes. But Grenville was of stouter stuff than the court favourite, and his administration was hardly reformed when he struck at the growing opposition to Parliament by a blow at its leader. In "number 45" of the *North-Briton* Wilkes had censured the speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament, and a "general warrant" by the Secretary of State was issued against the "authors, printers, and publishers of this seditious libel." Under this warrant forty-nine persons were seized for a time; and in spite of his privilege as a member of Parliament Wilkes himself was sent to the Tower. The arrest however was so utterly illegal that he was at once released by the Court of Common Pleas; but he was immediately prosecuted for libel. The national indignation at the harshness of these proceedings passed into graver disapproval when Parliament took advantage of the case to set itself up as a judicial tribunal for the trial of its own assailant. While the paper which formed the subject for prosecution was still before the courts of justice it was condemned by the House of Commons as a "false, scandalous, and seditious libel." The House of Lords at the same time voted a pamphlet found among Wilkes's papers to be blasphemous, and advised a prosecution. Though Pitt at once denounced the course of the two Houses as unconstitutional, his protest, like that of Shelburne in the Lords, proved utterly ineffectual; and Wilkes, who fled in terror to France, was expelled at the opening of 1764 from the House of Commons. Rapid and successful blows such as these seem to have shown to how

frivolous an assailant Bute had yielded. But if Wilkes fled over the Channel, Grenville found he had still England to deal with. The assumption of an arbitrary judicial power by both Houses, and the system of terror which the Minister put in force against the Press by issuing two hundred injunctions against different journals, roused a storm of indignation throughout the country. Every street resounded with cries of "Wilkes and Liberty!" Every shutter through the town was chalked with "No. 45;" the old bonfires and tumults broke out with fresh violence; and the Common Council of London refused to thank the sheriffs for dispersing the mob. It was soon clear that opinion had been embittered rather than silenced by the blow at Wilkes.

The same narrowness of view, the same honesty of purpose, the same obstinacy of temper, were shown by Grenville in a yet more important struggle, a struggle with the American Colonies. The plans of Bute for their taxation and restraint had fallen to the ground on his retirement and that of Townshend from office. Lord Shelburne succeeded Townshend at the Board of Trade, and young as he was, Shelburne was too sound a statesman to suffer these plans to be revived. But the resignation of Shelburne in 1763, after the failure of Pitt to form a united ministry, again reopened the question. Grenville had fully concurred in a part at least of Bute's designs; and now that he found himself at the head of a strong administration he again turned his attention to the Colonies. On one important side his policy wholly differed from that of Townshend or Bute. With Bute as with the King the question of deriving a revenue from America was chiefly important as one which would bring the claims of independent taxation and legislation put forward by the colonies to an issue, and in the end—as it was hoped—bring about a reconstruction of their democratic institutions and a closer union of the colonies under British rule. Grenville's aim was strictly financial. His conservative and

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constitutional temper made him averse from any sweeping changes in the institutions of the Colonies. He put aside as roughly as Shelburne the projects which had been suggested for the suppression of colonial charters, the giving power in the Colonies to military officers, or the payment of Crown officers in America by the English treasury. All he desired was that the colonies should contribute what he looked on as their just share towards the relief of the burthens left by the war; and it was with a view to this that he proceeded to carry out the financial plans which had been devised for the purpose of raising both an external and an internal revenue from America.

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Act.*

If such a policy was more honest, it was at the same time more absurd than that of Bute. Bute had at any rate aimed at a great revolution in the whole system of colonial government. Grenville aimed simply at collecting a couple of hundred thousand pounds, and he knew that even this wretched sum must be immensely lessened unless his plans were cordially accepted by the colonists. He knew too that there was small hope of such an acceptance. On the contrary, they at once met with a dogged opposition; and though the shape which that opposition took was a legal and technical one, it really opened up the whole question of the relation of the Colonies to the mother-country. Proud as England was of her imperial position she had as yet failed to grasp the difference between an empire and a nation. A nation is an aggregate of individual citizens, bound together in a common and equal relation to the state which they form. An empire is an aggregate of political bodies, bound together by a common relation to a central state, but whose relations to it may vary from the closest dependency to the loosest adhesion. To Grenville and the bulk of his fellow-countrymen the Colonies were as completely English soil as England itself, nor did they see any difference in political rights or in their relation to the Imperial legislature between an Englishman of Massachusetts and a man of Kent. What rights their

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charters gave the Colonies they looked on as not strictly political but municipal rights; they were not states but corporations; and, as corporate bodies, whatever privileges might have been given them, they were as completely the creatures and subjects of the English Crown as the corporate body of a borough or of a trading company. Their very existence in fact rested in a like way on the will of the Crown; on a breach of the conditions under which they were granted their charters were revocable and their privileges ceased, their legislatures and the rights of their legislatures came to end as completely as the common council of a borough that had forfeited its franchise or the rights of that common council. It was true that save in matters of trade and navigation the Imperial Parliament or the Imperial Crown had as yet left them mainly to their own self-government; above all that it had not subjected them to the burthen of taxation which was borne by other Englishmen at home. But it had more than once asserted its right to tax the colonies; it had again and again refused assent to acts of their legislatures which denied such a right; and from the very nature of things they held it impossible that such a right could exist. No bounds could be fixed for the supremacy of the King in Parliament over every subject of the Crown, and the colonist of America was as absolutely a subject as the ordinary Englishman. On mere grounds of law Grenville was undoubtedly right in his assertion of such a view as this; for the law had grown up under purely national conditions, and without a consciousness of the new political world to which it was now to be applied. What the colonists had to urge against it was really the fact of such a world. They were Englishmen, but they were Englishmen parted from England by three thousand miles of sea. They could not, if they would, share the common political life of men at home; nature had imposed on them their own political life; what charters had done was not to create but to recognize a state of things which sprang from the very circumstances under

CHAP. I. which the Colonies had originated and grown into being. Nor could any cancelling of charters cancel those circumstances. No act of Parliament could annihilate the Atlantic. The political status of the man of Massachusetts could not be identical with that of the man of Kent, because that of the Kentish man rested on his right of being represented in Parliament and thus sharing in a work of self-government, while the other from sheer distance could not exercise such a right. The pretence of equality was in effect the assertion of inequality; for it was to subject the colonist to the burthens of Englishmen without giving him any effective share in the right of self-government which Englishmen purchased by supporting those burthens. But the wrong was even greater than this. The Kentish man really took his share in governing through his representative in Parliament the Empire to which the colonist belonged. If the colonist had no such share he became the subject of the Kentish man. The pretence of political identity had ended in the establishment not only of serfdom but of the most odious form of serfdom, a subjection to one's fellow-subjects.

*The
theory of
the colo-
nists.*

The only alternative for so impossible a relation was the recognition of such relations as actually existed. While its laws remained national, England had grown from a nation into an empire. Whatever theorists might allege, the Colonies were in fact political bodies with a distinct life of their own, whose connexion with the mother-country had in the last hundred years taken a definite and peculiar form. Their administration in its higher parts was in the hands of the mother-country. Their legislation on all internal affairs, though lightly supervised by the mother-country, was practically in their own hands. They exercised without interference the right of self-taxation, while the mother-country exercised with as little interference the right of monopolizing their trade. Against this monopoly of their trade not a voice was as yet raised among the colonists. They justly looked on it as an enormous contri-

bution to the wealth of Britain, which might fairly be taken in place of any direct supplies, and which, while it asserted the sovereignty of the mother-country, left their local freedom untouched. The harshness of such a monopoly had indeed been somewhat mitigated by a system of contraband trade which had grown up between American ports and the adjacent Spanish islands, a trade so necessary for the Colonies, and in the end so beneficial to British commerce itself, that statesmen like Walpole had winked at its developement. The pedantry of Grenville however saw in it only an infringement of British monopoly; and one of his first steps was to suppress this contraband trade by a rigid enforcement of the navigation laws. Harsh and unwise as these measures seemed, the colonists owned their legality; and their resentment only showed itself in a pledge to use no British manufactures till the restrictions were relaxed. But such a stroke was a mere measure of retaliation, whose pressure was pretty sure in the end to effect its aim; and even in their moment of irritation the colonists uttered no protest against the monopoly of their trade. Their position indeed was strictly conservative; what they claimed was a continuance of the existing connexion; and had their claim been admitted, they would probably have drifted quietly into such a relation to the crown as that of our actual colonies in Canada and Australasia.

What the issue of such a policy might have been as America grew to a population and wealth beyond those of the mother-country, it is hard to guess. But no such policy was to be tried. The next scheme of the Minister—his proposal to introduce internal taxation within the bounds of the Colonies themselves by reviving the project of an excise or stamp duty, which Walpole's good sense had rejected—was of another order from his schemes for suppressing the contraband traffic. Unlike the system of the Navigation Acts, it was a gigantic change in the whole actual relations of England and its colonies. They met

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Stamp
Act
passed.*

CHAP. I. it therefore in another spirit. Taxation and representation, they asserted, went hand in hand. America had no representatives in the British Parliament. The representatives of the colonists met in their own colonial assemblies, and these were willing to grant supplies of a larger amount than a stamp-tax would produce. Massachusetts—first as ever in her protest—marked accurately the position she took. "Prohibitions of trade are neither equitable nor just; but the power of taxing is the grand banner of British liberty. If that is once broken down, all is lost." The distinction was accepted by the assembly of every colony; and it was with their protest and offer that they despatched Benjamin Franklin, who had risen from his position of a working printer in Philadelphia to high repute among scientific discoverers, as their agent to England. In England Franklin found few who recognized the distinction which the colonists had drawn; it was indeed incompatible with the universal belief in the omnipotence of the Imperial Parliament. But there were many who held that such taxation was unadvisable, that the control of trade was what a country really gained from its colonies, that it was no work of a statesman to introduce radical changes into relations so delicate as those of a mother-country and its dependencies, and that, boundless as was the power of Parliament in theory, "it should voluntarily set bounds to the exercise of its power." It had the right to tax Ireland but it never used it. The same self-restraint might be extended to America, and the more that the colonists were in the main willing to tax themselves for the general defence. Unluckily Franklin could give no assurance as to a union for the purpose of such taxation, and without such an assurance Grenville had no mind to change his plans. In February, 1765, the Stamp Act was passed through both Houses with less opposition than a turnpike bill.

At this critical moment Pitt was absent from the House of Commons. "When the resolution was taken to tax

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America, I was ill and in bed," he said a few months later. "If I could have endured to be carried in my bed, so great was the agitation of my mind for the consequences, I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it." He was soon however called to a position where his protest might have been turned to action. The Stamp Act was hardly passed when an insult offered to the Princess Dowager, by the exclusion of her name from a Regency Act, brought to a head the quarrel which had long been growing between the ministry and the King. George again offered power to William Pitt, and so great was his anxiety to free himself from Grenville's dictation that he consented absolutely to Pitt's terms. He waived his objection to that general return of the whole Whig party to office which Pitt had laid down in 1763 as a condition of his own. He consented to his demands for a change of policy in America, for the abolition of general warrants, and the formation of a Protestant system of German alliances as a means of counteracting the family compact of the house of Bourbon. The formation of the new ministry seemed secured, when the refusal of Earl Temple to join it brought Pitt's efforts abruptly to an end. Temple was Pitt's brother-in-law, and Pitt was not only bound to him by strong family ties, but he found in him his only Parliamentary support. The great commoner had not a single follower of his own in the House of Commons, nor a single seat in it at his disposal. What following he seemed to have was simply that of the Grenvilles; and it was the support of his brothers-in-law, Lord Temple and George Grenville, which had enabled him in great part to hold his own against the Whig connexion in the Ministry of 1757. But George Grenville had parted from him at its close, and now Lord Temple drew to his brother rather than to Pitt. His refusal to join the Cabinet left Pitt absolutely alone so far as Parliamentary strength went, and he felt himself too weak, when thus deserted, to hold

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his ground in any ministerial combination with the Whigs. Disappointed in two successive efforts to form a ministry by the same obstacle, he returned to his seat in Somersetshire, while the King turned for help to the main body of the Whigs.

The
Rockingham
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The age and incapacity of the Duke of Newcastle had placed the Marquis of Rockingham at the head of this section of the party, after it had been driven from office to make way for the supremacy of Bute. Thinned as it was by the desertion of Grenville and Townshend, as well as of the Bedford faction, it still claimed an exclusive right to the name of the Whigs. Rockingham was honest of purpose, he was free from all taint of the corruption of men like Newcastle, and he was inclined to a pure and lofty view of the nature and end of government. But he was young, timid, and of small abilities, and he shared to the full the dislike of the great Whig nobles to Pitt and the popular sympathies on which Pitt's power rested. The weakness of the ministry which he formed in July, 1765, was seen in its slowness to deal with American affairs. Rockingham looked on the Stamp Act as inexpedient; but he held firmly against Pitt and Shelburne the right of Parliament to tax and legislate for the Colonies, and it was probably through this difference of sentiment that Pitt refused to join his ministry on its formation. For six months he made no effort to repeal the obnoxious Acts, and in fact suffered preparations to go on for enforcing them. News however soon came from America which made this attitude impossible. Vigorously as he had struggled against the acts, Franklin had seen no other course for the Colonies, when they were passed, but that of submission. But submission was the last thing the colonists dreamed of. Everywhere through New England riots broke out on the news of the arrival of the stamped paper; and the frightened collectors resigned their posts. Northern and Southern States were drawn together by the new danger. "Virginia," it was proudly said afterwards, "rang the alarm bell;"

its assembly was the first to formally deny the right of the British Parliament to meddle with internal taxation, and to demand the repeal of the acts. Massachusetts not only adopted the denial and the demand as its own, but proposed a Congress of delegates from all the colonial assemblies to provide for common and united action; and in October 1765 this Congress met to repeat the protest and petition of Virginia.

The Congress was the beginning of American union. "There ought to be no New Englandman, no New Yorker known on this continent," said one of its members, "but all of us Americans." The news of its assembly reached England at the end of the year and perplexed the ministry, two of whose members now declared themselves in favour of repealing the acts. But Rockingham would promise at most no more than suspension; and when the Houses met in the spring of 1766 no voice but Shelburne's was raised in the Peers for repeal. In the Commons however the news at once called Pitt to the front. As a minister he had long since rejected a similar scheme for taxing the Colonies. He had been ill and absent from Parliament when the Stamp Act was passed. But he adopted to the full the constitutional claim of America. He gloried in a resistance which was denounced in Parliament as rebellion. "In my opinion," he said, "this kingdom has no right to lay a tax on the Colonies. . . . America is obstinate! America is almost in open rebellion! Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be slaves would have been fit instruments to make slaves of the rest." "He spoke," said a looker-on, "like a man inspired," and he ended by a demand for the absolute, total, and immediate repeal of the acts. It is from this moment that the bitter hatred of George the Third to Pitt may be dated. In an outburst of resentment the King called him a trumpet of sedition, and openly wished for his death. But the general desire that he should return to office was

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CHAP. I. quickened by the sense of power which spoke in his words, and now that the first bitterness of finding himself alone had passed away, Pitt was willing to join the Whigs. Negotiations were opened for this purpose; but they at once broke down. Weak as they felt themselves, Rockingham and his colleagues now shrank from Pitt, as on the formation of their ministry Pitt had shrunk from them. Personal feeling no doubt played its part; for in any united administration Pitt must necessarily take the lead, and Rockingham was in no mood to give up his supremacy. But graver political reasons, as we have seen, co-operated with this jealousy and distrust; and the blind sense which the Whigs had long had of a radical difference between their policy and that of Pitt was now defined for them by the keenest political thinker of the day.

Edmund
Burke.

At this moment Rockingham was in great measure guided by the counsels of his secretary, Edmund Burke. Burke had come to London in 1750 as a poor and unknown Irish adventurer. But the learning which at once won him the friendship of Johnson, and the imaginative power which enabled him to give his learning a living shape, soon promised him a philosophical and literary career. Instinct however drew Burke not to literature but to politics. He became secretary to Lord Rockingham, and in 1765 entered Parliament under his patronage. His speech on the repeal of the Stamp Acts at once lifted him into fame. The heavy Quaker-like figure, the scratch wig, the round spectacles, the cumbrous roll of paper which loaded Burke's pocket, gave little promise of a great orator and less of the characteristics of his oratory—its passionate ardour, its poetic fancy, its amazing prodigality of resources; the dazzling succession in which irony, pathos, invective, tenderness, the most brilliant word-pictures, the coolest argument followed each other. It was an eloquence indeed of a wholly new order in English experience. Walpole's clearness of statement, Pitt's appeals to emotion, were exchanged for the im-

passioned expression of a distinct philosophy of politics. "I have learned more from him than from all the books I ever read," Fox cried at a later time, with a burst of generous admiration. The philosophical cast of Burke's reasoning was unaccompanied by any philosophical coldness of tone or phrase. The groundwork indeed of his nature was poetic. His ideas, if conceived by the reason, took shape and colour from the splendour and fire of his imagination. A nation was to him a great living society, so complex in its relations, and whose institutions were so interwoven with glorious events in the past, that to touch it rudely was a sacrilege. Its constitution was no artificial scheme of government, but an exquisite balance of social forces which was in itself a natural outcome of its history and development. His temper was in this way conservative, but his conservatism sprang not from a love of inaction but from a sense of the value of social order, and from an imaginative reverence for all that existed. Every institution was hallowed to him by the clear insight with which he discerned its relations to the past and its subtle connexion with the social fabric around it. To touch even an anomaly seemed to Burke to be risking the ruin of a complex structure of national order which it had cost centuries to build up. "The equilibrium of the constitution," he said, "has something so delicate about it, that the least displacement may destroy it." "It is a difficult and dangerous matter even to touch so complicated a machine."

Perhaps the readiest refutation of such a theory was to be found in its influence on Burke's practical dealing with politics. In the great question indeed which fronted him as he entered Parliament, it served him well. No man has ever seen with deeper insight the working of those natural forces which build up communities, or which group communities into empires; and in the actual state of the American Colonies, in their actual relation to the mother-country, he saw a result of such forces which only madmen and pedants would disturb. To enter upon "grounds

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of Government," to remodel this great structure of empire on a theoretical basis, seemed to him a work for "metaphysicians," and not for statesmen. What statesmen had to do was to take this structure as it was, and by cautious and delicate adjustment to accommodate from time to time its general shape and the relations of its various parts to the varying circumstances of their natural development. Nothing, in other words, could be truer than Burke's political philosophy when the actual state of things was good in itself, and its preservation a recognition of the harmony of political institutions with political facts. But nothing could be more unwise than his philosophy when he applied it to a state of things which in itself was evil, and which was in fact a defiance of the natural growth and adjustment of political power. It was thus that he applied it to politics at home. He looked on the Revolution of 1688 as the final establishment of English institutions. His aim was to keep England as the Revolution had left it, and under the rule of the great nobles who were faithful to the Revolution. Such a conviction left him hostile to all movement whatever. He gave his passionate adhesion to the inaction of the Whigs. He made an idol of Lord Rockingham, an honest man, but the weakest of party leaders. He strove to check the corruption of Parliament by a bill for civil retrenchment, but he took the lead in defeating all plans for its reform. Though he was one of the few men in England who understood the value of free industry, he struggled bitterly against all proposals to give freedom to Irish trade, and against the Commercial Treaty which the younger Pitt concluded with France. His work seemed to be that of investing with a gorgeous poetry the policy of timid content which the Whigs believed they inherited from Sir Robert Walpole; and the very intensity of his trust in the natural development of a people rendered him incapable of understanding the good that might come from particular or from special reforms.

It was this temper of Burke's mind which estranged him

from Pitt. His political sagacity had discerned that the true basis of the Whig party must henceforth be formed in a combination of that "power drawn from popularity" which was embodied in Pitt with the power which the Whig families drew from political "connexion." But with Pitt's popular tendencies Burke had no real sympathy. He looked on his eloquence as mere rant; he believed his character to be hollow, selfish, and insincere. Above all he saw in him with a true foreboding the representative of forces before which the actual method of government must go down. The popularity of Pitt in face of his Parliamentary isolation was a sign that the House of Commons was no real representative of the English people. Burke foresaw that Pitt was drifting inevitably to a demand for a reform of the House which should make it representative in fact as in name. The full issues of such a reform, the changes which it would bring with it, the displacement of political power which it would involve, Burke alone of the men of his day understood. But he understood them only to shrink from them with horror, and to shrink with almost as great a horror from the man who was leading England on in the path of change.

At this crisis then the temper of Burke squared with the temper of the Whig party and of Rockingham; and the difference between Pitt's tendencies and their own came to the front on the question of dealing with the troubles in America. Pitt was not only for a repeal of the Stamp Acts, but for an open and ungrudging acknowledgement of the claim to a partial independence which had been made by the colonists. His genius saw that, whatever were the legal rights of the mother-country, the time had come when the union between England and its children across the Atlantic must rest rather on sentiment than on law. Such a view was wholly unintelligible to the mass of the Whigs or the ministry. They were willing, rather than heighten American discontent, to repeal

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of the
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CHAP. I. the Stamp Acts; but they looked on the supremacy of England and of the English Parliament over all English dependencies as a principle absolutely beyond question. From the union, therefore, which Pitt offered Rockingham and his fellow-ministers stood aloof. They were driven, whether they would or no, to a practical acknowledgement of the policy which he demanded; but they resolved that the repeal of the Stamp Acts should be accompanied by a formal repudiation of the principles of colonial freedom which Pitt had laid down. A declaratory act was first brought in, which asserted the supreme power of Parliament over the Colonies "in all cases whatsoever." The declaration was intended no doubt to reassure the followers of the ministry as well as their opponents, for in the assertion of the omnipotence of the two Houses to which they belonged Whig and Tory were at one. But it served also as a public declaration of the difference which severed the Whigs from the Great Commoner. In a full house Pitt found but two supporters in his fierce attack upon the declaratory bill, which was supported by Burke in a speech which at once gave him rank as an orator; while Pitt's lieutenant, Shelburne, found but four supporters in a similar attack in the Lords. The passing of the declaratory act was followed by the introduction of a bill for the repeal of the Stamp Acts; and in spite of the resistance of the King's friends, a resistance instigated by George himself, the bill was carried in February 1766 by a large majority.

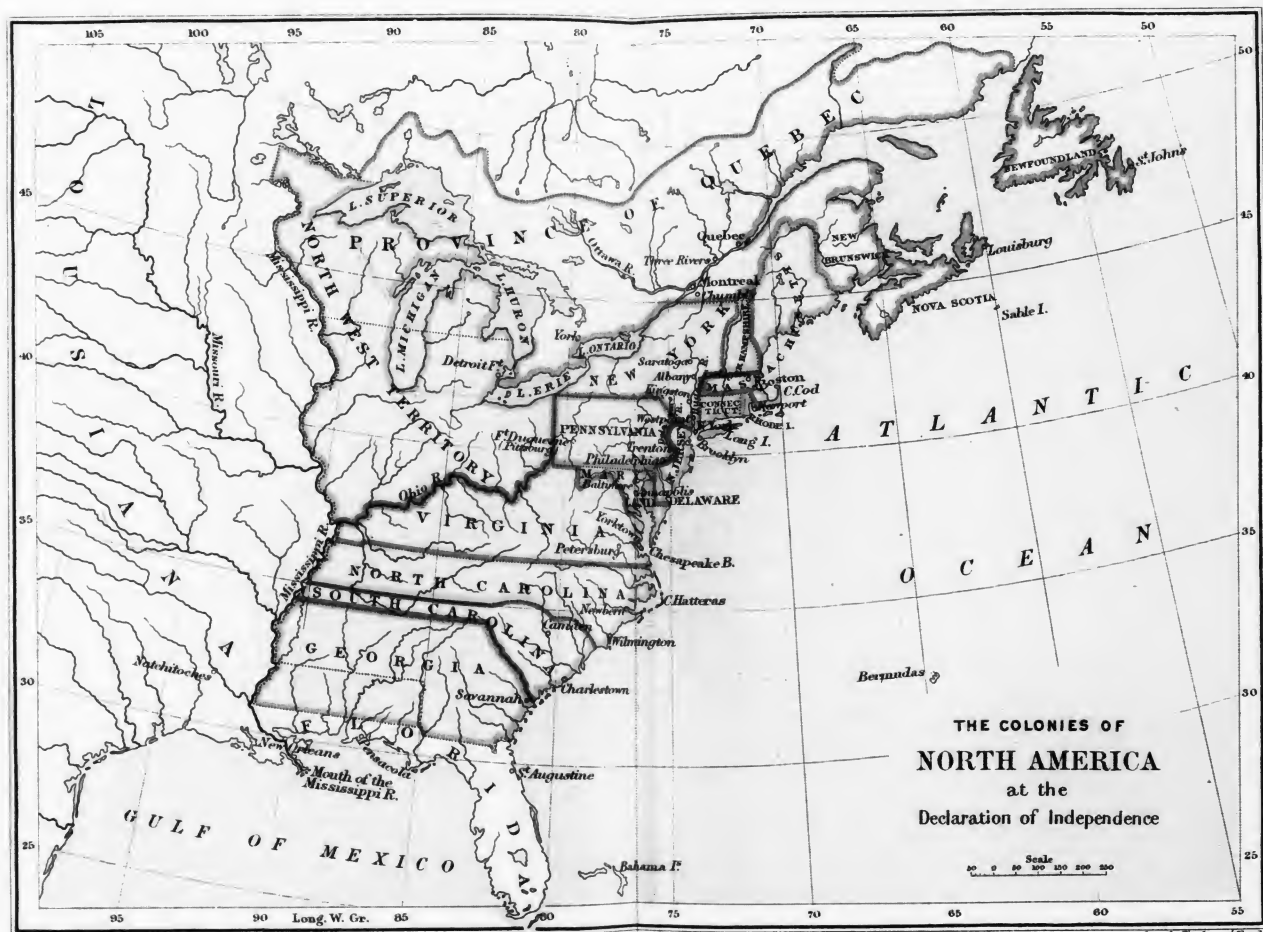
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As the members left the House of Commons, George Grenville, whose resistance had been fierce and dogged, was hooted by the crowd which waited to learn the issue without. Before Pitt the multitude reverently uncovered their heads and followed him home with blessings. It was the noblest hour of his life. For the moment indeed he had "saved England" more truly than even at the crisis of the Seven Years' War. His voice had forced on the ministry and the King a measure which averted, though

but for a while, the fatal struggle between England and her Colonies. Lonely as he was, the ministry which had rejected his offers of aid found itself unable to stand against the general sense that the first man in the country should be its ruler; and bitter as was the King's hatred of him, Rockingham's resignation in the summer of 1766 forced George to call Pitt into office. His acceptance of the King's call and the measures which he took to construct a ministry showed a new resolve in the great statesman. He had determined to break finally with the political tradition which hampered him, and to set aside even the dread of Parliamentary weakness which had fettered him three years before. Temple's refusal of aid, save on terms of equality which were wholly inadmissible, was passed by, though it left Pitt without a party in the House of Commons. In the same temper he set at defiance the merely Parliamentary organization of the Whigs by excluding Newcastle, while he showed his wish to unite the party as a whole by his offer of posts to nearly all the members of the late administration. Though Rockingham stood coldly aside, some of his fellow-ministers accepted Pitt's offers, and they were reinforced by Lords Shelburne and Camden, the young Duke of Grafton, and the few friends who still clung to the Great Commoner. Such a ministry however rested for power not on Parliament but on public opinion. It was in effect an appeal from Parliament to the people; and it was an appeal which made such a reform in Parliament as would bring it into unison with public opinion a mere question of time. Whatever may have been Pitt's ultimate designs, however, no word of such a reform was uttered by any one. On the contrary Pitt stooped to strengthen his Parliamentary support by admitting some even of the "King's friends" to a share in the administration. But its life lay really in Pitt himself, in his immense popularity, and in the command which his eloquence gave him over the House of Commons. His popularity indeed was soon

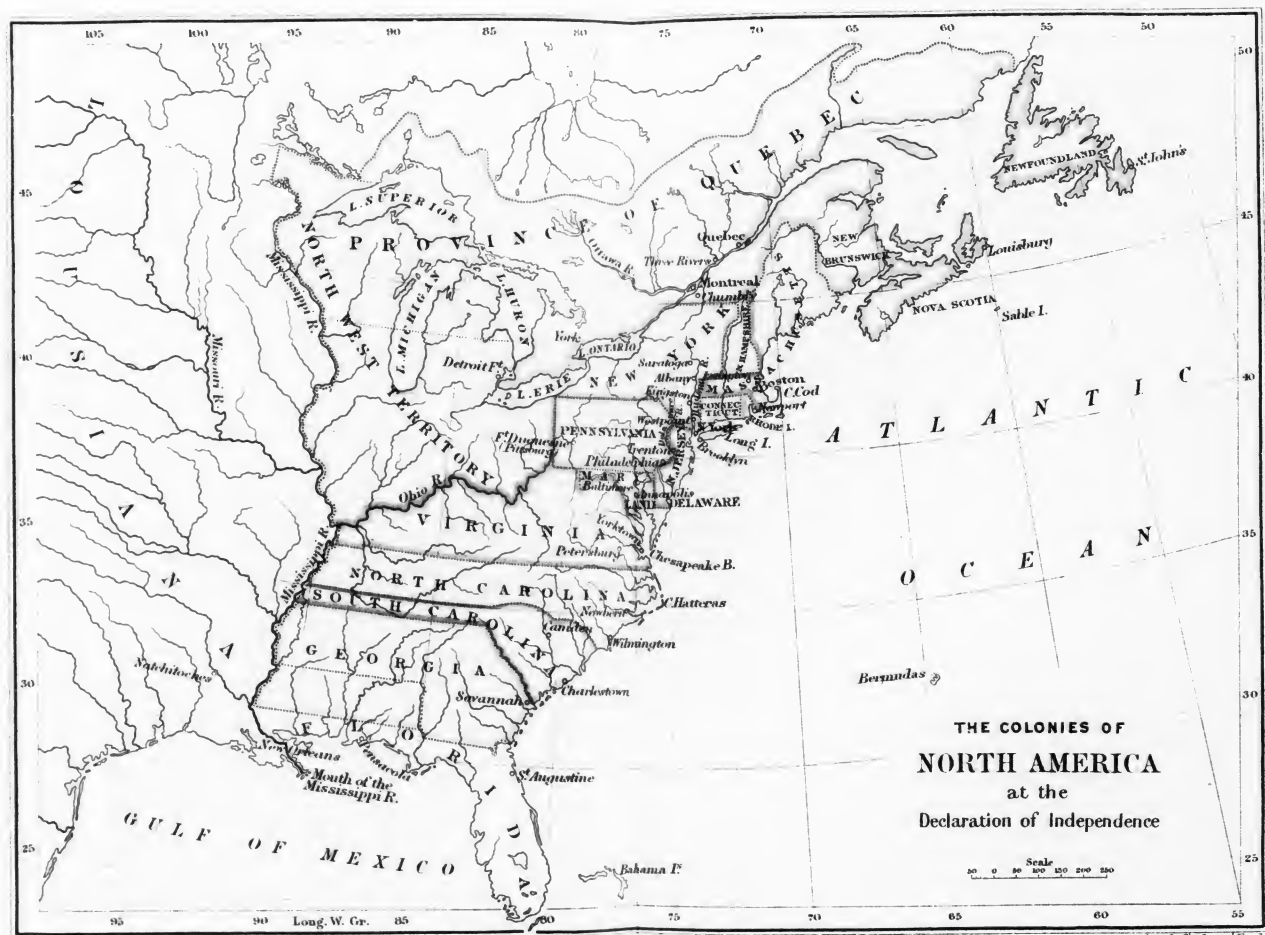
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CHAP. I. - roughly shaken; for the ministry was hardly formed when it was announced that its leader had accepted the Earldom of Chatham. The step removed him to the House of Lords, and for a while ruined the public confidence which his reputation for unselfishness had aided him to win. But it was from no vulgar ambition that Pitt laid down his title of the Great Commoner. The nervous disorganization which had shown itself three years before in his despair upon Temple's desertion had never ceased to hang around him, and it had been only at rare intervals that he had forced himself from his retirement to appear in the House of Commons. It was the consciousness of coming weakness that made him shun the storms of debate. But in the cabinet he showed all his old energy. The most jealous of his fellow-ministers owned his supremacy. At the close of one of his earliest councils Charles Townshend acknowledged to a colleague "Lord Chatham has just shown to us what inferior animals we are!" Plans were at once set on foot for the better government of Ireland, for the transfer of India from the Company to the Crown, and for the formation of an alliance with Prussia and Russia to balance the Family Compact of the House of Bourbon. The alliance was foiled for the moment by the coldness of Frederick of Prussia. The first steps towards Indian reform were only taken by the ministry under severe pressure from Pitt. Petty jealousies, too, brought about the withdrawal of some of the Whigs, and the hostility of Rockingham was shown by the fierce attacks of Burke in the House of Commons. But secession and invective had little effect on the ministry. "The session," wrote Horace Walpole to a friend at the close of 1776, "has ended triumphantly for the Great Earl;" and when Chatham withdrew to Bath to mature his plans for the coming year his power remained unshaken.



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CHAPTER II.

THE INDEPENDENCE OF AMERICA.

1767—1782.

THE Chatham ministry marked a new phase in the relation of public opinion to the government of the State. In 1766 as in 1756 Pitt had been called into office by "the voice of the people" at large. But in his former ministry the influence he drew from popularity could only make itself effective through an alliance with the influence which was drawn from political connexion; and when the two elements of the administration became opposed the support of the nation gave Pitt little strength of resistance against the Whigs. Nor had the young King had much better fortune as yet in his efforts to break their rule. He had severed them indeed from Pitt; and he had dexterously broken up the great party into jealous factions. But broken as it was, even its factions remained too strong for the King. His one effort at independence under Bute hardly lasted a year, and he was as helpless in the hands of Grenville as in the hands of Rockingham. His bribery, his patronage, his Parliamentary "friends," his perfidy and his lies, had done much to render good government impossible and to steep public life in deeper corruption, but they had done little to further the triumph of the Crown over the great houses. Of the one power indeed which could break the Whig rule, the power of public opinion, George was more bitterly jealous than even of the Whigs

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themselves. But in spite of his jealousy the tide of opinion steadily rose. In wise and in unwise ways the country at large showed its new interest in national policy, its new resolve to have a share in the direction of it. It showed no love for the King or the King's schemes. But it retained all its old disgust for the Whigs and for the Parliament. It clung to Pitt closer than ever, and in spite of his isolation from all party support raised him daily into a mightier power. It was the sense that a new England was thus growing up about him, that a new basis was forming itself for political action, which at last roused the great Commoner to the bold enterprize of breaking through the bonds of "connexion" altogether. For the first time since the Revolution a minister told the peers in their own house that he defied their combinations.

Chatham's
withdrawal.

The ministry of 1766 in fact was itself such a defiance; for it was an attempt to found political power not on the support of the Whigs as a party, but on the support of national opinion. But as Parliament was then constituted, it was only through Chatham himself that opinion could tell even on the administration he formed; and six months after he had taken office Chatham was no more than a name. The dread which had driven him from the stormy agitation of the Lower House to the quiet of the House of Peers now became a certainty. As winter died into the spring of 1767 his nervous disorganization grew into a painful and overwhelming illness which almost wholly withdrew him from public affairs; and when Parliament met again he was unable either to come to town or to confer with his colleagues. It was in vain that they prayed him for a single word of counsel. Chatham remained utterly silent; and the ministry which his guidance had alone held together at once fell into confusion. The Earl's plans were suffered to drop. His colleagues lost all cohesion, and each acted as he willed. Townshend, a brilliant but shallow rhetorician whom Pitt had been driven reluctantly to make his Chancellor of the Exchequer, after

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angering the House of Commons by proposals for an increase of the land-tax, strove to win back popularity among the squires by undertaking to raise a revenue from America. That a member of a ministry which bore Pitt's name should have proposed to reopen the question of colonial taxation within a year of the repeal of the Stamp Acts was strange enough to the colonists; and they were yet more astonished when, on its neglect to make provision for compensating those who had suffered from the recent outbreak in due conformity to an act of the British Parliament, the Assembly of New York was suspended, and when Townshend redeemed his pledge by laying duties on various objects brought into American ports. But these measures were the result of levity and disorganization rather than of any purpose to reopen the quarrel. Pitt's colleagues had as yet no design to reverse his policy. The one aim of the ministry which bore his name, and which during his retirement looked to the Duke of Grafton as its actual head, was simply to exist. But in the face of Chatham's continued withdrawal, of Townshend's death in 1767, and of the increasing hostility of the Rockingham Whigs, even existence was difficult; and Grafton saw himself forced to a union with the faction which was gathered under the Duke of Bedford, and to the appointment of a Tory noble as Secretary of State.

Such measures however only showed how far the ministry had drifted from the ground on which Pitt took his stand in its formation; and the very force on which he had relied turned at once against it. The elections for the new Parliament which met in 1768 were more corrupt than any that had as yet been witnessed; and even the stoutest opponents of reform shrank aghast from the open bribery of constituencies and the prodigal barter of seats. How bitter the indignation of the country had grown was seen in its fresh backing of Wilkes. Wilkes had remained in France since his outlawry; but he seized on the opening afforded by the elections to return and offer himself as

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resignation.

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a member for the new Parliament. To the surprize and dismay of the ministers he was returned for Middlesex, a county the large number of whose voters made its choice a real expression of public opinion. The choice of Wilkes at such a moment was in effect a public condemnation of the House of Commons and the ministerial system. The ministry however and the House alike shrank from a fresh struggle with the agitator. But the King was eager for the contest. After ten years of struggle and disappointment George had all but reached his aim. The two forces which had as yet worsted him were both of them paralyzed. The Whigs were fatally divided, and discredited in the eyes of the country by their antagonism to Pitt. Pitt on the other hand was suddenly removed from the stage. The ministry was without support in the country; and for Parliamentary support it was forced to lean more and more on the men who looked for direction to the King himself. At a moment when all hope of exerting any influence seemed crushed by the return of Chatham to power, George found his influence predominant as it had never been before. One force of opposition alone remained in the public discontent; and at this he struck more fiercely than ever. "I think it highly expedient to apprise you," he wrote to Lord North, "that the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes appears to be very essential, and must be effected." The ministers and the House of Commons bowed to his will. By his non-appearance in court when charged with libel, Wilkes had become an outlaw, and he was now thrown into prison on his outlawry. Dangerous riots broke out in London and over the whole country at the news of his arrest; and continued throughout the rest of the year. In the midst of these tumults the ministry itself was torn with internal discord. The adherents of Chatham found their position in it an intolerable one; and Lord Shelburne announced his purpose of resigning office. The announcement was followed in the autumn by the resignation of Chatham himself. Though still prostrated by disease, the

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Earl was sufficiently restored to grasp the actual position of the cabinet which traded on his name, and in October 1768 he withdrew formally from the ministry.

The withdrawal of Chatham however, if it shook the ministry, only rendered it still more dependent on the King; and in spite of its reluctance George forced it to plunge into a decisive struggle with the public opinion which was declaring itself in tumult and riot against the system of government. The triumph of Wilkes had been driven home by the election of a nominee of the great agitator as his colleague on a fresh vacancy in the representation of Middlesex. The Government met the blow by a show of vigour, and by calling on the magistrates of Surrey to disperse the mobs; a summons which ended in conflicts between the crowd and the soldiers, in which some of the rioters were slain. Wilkes at once published the letter of the Secretary of State with comments on it as a cause of bloodshed; and the ministry accepted the step as a challenge to combat. If his comments were libellous, the libel was cognizable in the ordinary courts of law. But no sooner had Parliament assembled in 1769 than the House of Commons was called to take the matter into its own hands. Witnesses were examined at its bar: the forms of a trial were gone through; and as Wilkes persisted in his charge, he was expelled as a libeller. Unluckily the course which had been adopted put the House itself on trial before the constituencies. No sooner was the new writ issued than Wilkes again presented himself as a candidate, and was again elected by the shire of Middlesex. Violent and oppressive as the course of the House of Commons had been, it had as yet acted within its strict right, for no one questioned its possession of a right of expulsion. But the defiance of Middlesex led it now to go further. It resolved, "That Mr. Wilkes having been in this session of Parliament expelled the House, was and is incapable of being elected a member to serve in the present Parliament;" and

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it issued a writ for a fresh election. Middlesex answered this insolent claim to limit the free choice of a constituency by again returning Wilkes; and the House was driven by its anger to a fresh and more outrageous usurpation. It again expelled the member for Middlesex; and on his return for the third time by an immense majority it voted that the candidate whom he had defeated, Colonel Luttrell, ought to have been returned, and was the legal representative of Middlesex. The Commons had not only limited at their own arbitrary discretion the free election of the constituency, but they had transferred its rights to themselves by seating Luttrell as member in defiance of the deliberate choice of Wilkes by the freeholders of Middlesex. The country at once rose indignantly against this violation of constitutional law. Wilkes was elected an Alderman of London; and the Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery petitioned the King to dissolve the Parliament. A remonstrance from London and Westminster mooted a far larger question. It said boldly that "there is a time when it is clearly demonstrable that men cease to be representatives. That time is now arrived. The House of Commons do not represent the people." Meanwhile a writer who styled himself Junius attacked the Government in letters, which, rancorous and unscrupulous as was their tone, gave a new power to the literature of the Press by their clearness and terseness of statement, the finish of their style, and the terrible vigour of their invective.

Parliamentary
Reform.

The storm however beat idly on the obstinacy of the King. The printer of the bold letters was prosecuted, and the petitions and remonstrances of London were haughtily rejected. The issue of the struggle verified the forebodings of Burke. If, as Middlesex declared, and as the strife itself proved, the House of Commons had ceased to represent the English people, it was inevitable that men should look forward to measures that would make it representative. At the beginning of 1770 a cessation of the disease which had long held him prostrate enabled

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Chatham to reappear in the House of Lords. He at once denounced the usurpations of the Commons, and brought in a bill to declare them illegal. But his genius made him the first to see that remedies of this sort were inadequate to meet evils which really sprang from the fact that the House of Commons no longer represented the people of England; and he mooted a plan for its reform by an increase of the county members, who then formed the most independent portion of the House. Further he could not go, for even in the proposals he made he stood almost alone. The Tories and the King's friends were not likely to welcome proposals which would lessen the King's influence. On the other hand the Whigs under Lord Rockingham had no sympathy with Parliamentary reform. As early as 1769, in his first political publication, their one philosophic thinker, Edmund Burke, had met a proposal to enlarge the number of constituents by a counter proposal to lessen them. "It would be more in the spirit of our constitution, and more agreeable to the fashion of our best laws," he said, "by lessening the number to add to the weight and independency of our voters." Nor did the Whigs shrink with less haughty disdain from the popular agitation in which public opinion was forced to express itself, and which Chatham, while censuring its extravagance, as deliberately encouraged. It is from the quarrel between Wilkes and the House of Commons that we may date the influence of public meetings on English politics. The gatherings of the Middlesex electors in his support were preludes to the great meetings of Yorkshire freeholders in which the question of Parliamentary reform rose into importance; and it was in the movement for reform, and the establishment of corresponding committees throughout the country for the purpose of promoting it, that the power of political agitation first made itself felt. Political societies and clubs took their part in this quickening and organization of public opinion: and the spread of discussion, as well as the influence

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Publication
of debates.

which now began to be exercised by the appearance of vast numbers of men in support of any political movement, proved that Parliament, whether it would or no, must soon reckon with the sentiments of the people at large.

But an agent far more effective than popular agitation was preparing to bring the force of public opinion to bear directly on Parliament itself. We have seen how much of the corruption of the House of Commons sprang from the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, but this secrecy was the harder to preserve as the nation woke to a greater interest in its own affairs. From the accession of the Georges imperfect reports of the more important discussions began to be published under the title of "The Senate of Lilliput," and with feigned names or simple initials to denote the speakers. The best known reports of this kind were those contributed by Samuel Johnson to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Obtained by stealth and often merely recalled by memory, such reports were naturally inaccurate; and their inaccuracy was eagerly seized on as a pretext for enforcing the rules which guarded the secrecy of proceedings in Parliament. In 1771 the Commons issued a proclamation forbidding the publication of debates; and six printers, who set it at defiance, were summoned to the bar of the House. One who refused to appear was arrested by its messenger; but the arrest brought the House into conflict with the magistrates of London. The magistrates set aside its proclamation as without legal force, released the printers, and sent the messenger to prison for an unlawful arrest. The House sent the Lord Mayor to the Tower, but the cheers of the crowds which followed him on his way told that public opinion was again with the Press, and the attempt to hinder its publication of Parliamentary proceedings dropped silently on his release at the next prorogation. Few changes of equal importance have been so quietly brought about. Not only was the responsibility of members to their constituents made constant and effective by the

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publication of their proceedings, but the nation itself was called in to assist in the deliberations of its representatives. A new and wider interest in its own affairs was roused in the people at large, and a new political education was given to it through the discussion of every subject of national importance in the Houses and the Press. Stimulated and moulded into shape by free discussion, encouraged and made conscious of its strength by public meetings, and gathered up and represented on all its sides by the journals of the day, public opinion became a force in practical statesmanship, influenced the course of debates, and controlled, in a closer and more constant way than even Parliament itself had been able to do, the actions of the Government. The importance of its new position gave a weight to the Press which it had never had before. The first great English journals date from this time. With the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Herald*, and the *Times*, all of which appeared in the interval between the opening years of the American War and the beginning of the war with the French Revolution, journalism took a new tone of responsibility and intelligence. The hacks of Grub Street were superseded by publicists of a high moral temper and literary excellence; and philosophers like Coleridge or statesmen like Canning turned to influence public opinion through the columns of the Press.

But great as the influence of opinion was destined to become, it was feebly felt as yet; and George the Third was able to set Chatham's policy disdainfully aside and to plunge into a contest far more disastrous than his contest with the Press. In all the proceedings of the last few years, what had galled him most had been the act which averted a war between England and her colonies. To the King the Americans were already "rebels," and the great statesman whose eloquence had made their claims irresistible was a "trumpet of sedition." George deplored in his correspondence with his ministers the repeal of the Stamp

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Acts. "All men feel," he wrote, "that the fatal compliance in 1766 has increased the pretensions of the Americans to absolute independence." But in England generally the question was regarded as settled, while in America the news of the repeal had been received with universal joy, and taken as a close of the strife. On both sides however there remained a pride and irritability which only wise handling could have allayed; and in the present state of English politics wise handling was impossible. Only a few months indeed passed before the quarrel was again reopened; for no sooner had the illness of Lord Chatham removed him from any real share in public affairs than the wretched administration which bore his name suspended the Assembly of New York on its refusal to provide quarters for English troops, and resolved to assert British sovereignty by levying import duties of trivial amount at American ports. The Assembly of Massachusetts was dissolved on a trifling quarrel with its Governor, and Boston was occupied for a time by British soldiers. It was without a thought of any effective struggle however that the cabinet had entered on this course of vexation; and when the remonstrances of the Legislatures of Massachusetts and Virginia, coupled with a fall in the funds, warned the ministers of its danger, they hastened to withdraw from it. In 1769 the troops were recalled, and all duties, save one, abandoned. But with a fatal obstinacy the King insisted on retaining the duty on tea as an assertion of the supremacy of the mother country. Its retention was enough to prevent any thorough restoration of good feeling. A series of petty quarrels went on in almost every colony between the popular Assemblies and the Governors appointed by the Crown, and the colonists persisted in their agreement to import nothing from the mother country. As yet however there was no prospect of serious strife. In America the influence of George Washington allayed the irritation of Virginia; while Massachusetts contented

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itself with quarrelling with its Governor and refusing to buy tea so long as the duty was levied.

The temper of the colonists was in the main that of the bulk of English statesmen. Even George Grenville, though approving the retention of the duty in question, abandoned all dream of further taxation. But the King was now supreme. The reappearance and attack of Chatham at the opening of 1770 had completed the ruin of the ministry. Those of his adherents who still clung to it, Lord Camden, the Chancellor, Lord Granby, the Commander-in-Chief, Dunning, the Solicitor-General, resigned their posts. In a few days they were followed by the Duke of Grafton, who since Chatham's resignation had been nominally the head of the administration. All that remained of it were the Bedford faction and the dependents of the King; but George did not hesitate to form these into a ministry, and to place at its head the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord North, a man of some administrative ability, but unconnected with any political party, steadily opposed to any recognition of public opinion, and of an easy and indolent temper which yielded against his better knowledge to the stubborn doggedness of the King. The instinct of the country at once warned it of the results of such a change; and the City of London put itself formally at the head of the public discontent. In solemn addresses it called on George the Third to dismiss his ministers and to dissolve the Parliament; and its action was supported by petitions to the same effect from the greater counties. In the following year it fought, as we have seen, a battle with the House of Commons which established the freedom of the press. But the efforts of the country failed before the paralysis of political action which resulted from the position of the Whigs and the corruption of Parliament. The deaths of Grenville and Bedford broke up two of the Whig factions. Rockingham with the rest of the party held aloof from the popular agitation, and drew more and more away from Chatham as he favoured

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it. The Parliament remained steady to the King, and the King clung more and more to the ministry. The ministry was in fact a mere cloak for the direction of public affairs by George himself. "Not only did he direct the minister," a careful observer tells us, "in all important matters of foreign and domestic policy, but he instructed him as to the management of debates in Parliament, suggested what motions should be made or opposed, and how measures should be carried. He reserved for himself all the patronage, he arranged the whole cast of administration, settled the relative places and pretensions of ministers of State, law officers, and members of the household, nominated and promoted the English and Scotch judges, appointed and translated bishops and deans, and dispensed other preferences in the Church. He disposed of military governments, regiments, and commissions; and himself ordered the marching of troops. He gave and refused titles, honours, and pensions." All this immense patronage was persistently used for the creation and maintenance in both Houses of Parliament of a majority directed by the King himself; and its weight was seen in the steady action of such a majority. It was seen yet more in the subjection to which the ministry that bore North's name was reduced. George was in fact the minister through the years of its existence; and the shame of the darkest hour of English history lies wholly at his door.

The
Boston
tea-riots.

His fixed purpose was to seize on the first opportunity of undoing the "fatal compliance of 1766." A trivial riot gave him at last the handle he wanted. In December, 1773, the arrival of some English ships laden with tea kindled fresh irritation in Boston, where the non-importation agreement was strictly enforced; and a mob in the disguise of Indians boarded the vessels and flung their contents into the sea. The outrage was deplored alike by the friends of America in England and by its own leading statesmen; and both Washington and Chatham were prepared to support the Government in its looked-for

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demand of redress. But the thought of the King was not of redress but of repression, and he set roughly aside the more conciliatory proposals of Lord North and his fellow-ministers. They had already rejected as "frivolous and vexatious" a petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts for the dismissal of two public officers whose letters home advised the withdrawal of free institutions from the colonies. They now seized on the riot as a pretext for rigorous measures. A bill introduced into Parliament in the beginning of 1774 punished Boston by closing its port against all commerce. Another punished the State of Massachusetts by withdrawing the liberties it had enjoyed ever since the Pilgrim Fathers landed on its soil. Its charter was altered. The choice of its Council was transferred from the people to the Crown, and the nomination of its judges was transferred to the Governor. In the Governor too, by a provision more outrageous than even these, was vested the right of sending all persons charged with a share in the late disturbances to England for trial. To enforce these measures of repression troops were sent to America, and General Gage, the commander-in-chief there, was appointed Governor of Massachusetts. The King's exultation at the prospect before him was unbounded. "The die," he wrote triumphantly to his minister, "is cast. The colonies must either triumph or submit." Four regiments would be enough to bring the Americans to their senses. They would only be "lions while we are lambs." "If we take the resolute part," he decided solemnly, "they will undoubtedly be very meek."

Unluckily the blow at Massachusetts was received with anything but meekness. The jealousies between colony and colony were hushed by a sense that the liberties of all were in danger. If the British Parliament could cancel the charter of Massachusetts and ruin the trade of Boston, it could cancel the charter of every colony and ruin the trade of every port from the St. Lawrence to the coast of Georgia. All therefore adopted the cause of Massachusetts;

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and all their Legislatures save that of Georgia sent delegates to a Congress which assembled on the 4th of September at Philadelphia. Massachusetts took a yet bolder course. Not one of its citizens would act under the new laws. Its Assembly met in defiance of the Governor, called out the militia of the State, and provided arms and ammunition for it. But there was still room for reconciliation. The resolutions of the Congress had been moderate, for Virginia was the wealthiest and most influential among the States who sent delegates, and though resolute to resist the new measures of the government, Virginia still clung to the mother country. At home the merchants of London and Bristol pleaded loudly for reconciliation; and in January, 1775, Chatham again came forward to avert a strife he had once before succeeded in preventing. With characteristic largeness of feeling he set aside all half-measures or proposals of compromise. "It is not cancelling a piece of parchment," he insisted, "that can win back America: you must respect her fears and her resentments." The bill which he introduced in concert with Franklin provided for the repeal of the late acts and for the security of the colonial charters, abandoned the claim of taxation, and ordered the recall of the troops. A colonial assembly was directed to meet and provide means by which America might contribute towards the payment of the public debt.

Washington.

Chatham's measure was contemptuously rejected by the Lords, as was a similar measure of Burke's by the House of Commons, and a petition of the City of London in favour of the Colonies by the King himself. With the rejection of these efforts for conciliation began the great struggle which ended eight years later in the severance of the American Colonies from the British Crown. The Congress of delegates from the Colonial Legislatures at once voted measures for general defence, ordered the levy of an army, and set George Washington at its head. No nobler figure ever stood in the forefront of a nation's life. Washington was grave and courteous in address; his manners were

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simple and unpretending; his silence and the serene calmness of his temper spoke of a perfect self-mastery. But there was little in his outer bearing to reveal the grandeur of soul which lifts his figure with all the simple majesty of an ancient statue out of the smaller passions, the meaner impulses of the world around him. What recommended him for command was simply his weight among his fellow landowners of Virginia, and the experience of war which he had gained by service in border contests with the French and the Indians, as well as in Braddock's luckless expedition against Fort Duquesne. It was only as the weary fight went on that the colonists discovered, however slowly and imperfectly, the greatness of their leader, his clear judgement, his heroic endurance, his silence under difficulties, his calmness in the hour of danger or defeat, the patience with which he waited, the quickness and hardness with which he struck, the lofty and serene sense of duty that never swerved from its task through resentment or jealousy, that never through war or peace felt the touch of a meaner ambition, that knew no aim save that of guarding the freedom of his fellow countrymen, and no personal longing save that of returning to his own fireside when their freedom was secured. It was almost unconsciously that men learned to cling to Washington with a trust and faith such as few other men have won, and to regard him with a reverence which still hushes us in presence of his memory. But even America hardly recognized his real greatness while he lived. It was only when death set its seal on him that the voice of those whom he had served so long proclaimed him "the man first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow countrymen."

Washington more than any of his fellow colonists represented the clinging of the Virginian landowners to the mother country, and his acceptance of a military command proved that even the most moderate among the colonists had no hope now save in arms. The struggle opened with

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a skirmish between a party of English troops and a detachment of militia at Lexington on the nineteenth of April, 1775; and in a few days twenty thousand colonists appeared before Boston. The Congress reassembled, declared the States they represented "The United Colonies of America," and undertook the work of government. Meanwhile ten thousand fresh English troops landed at Boston. But the provincial militia, in number almost double that of the British force which prepared to attack them, seized a neck of ground which joins Boston to the mainland; and though on the 17th of June they were driven from the heights of Bunker's Hill which commanded the town, it was only after a desperate struggle in which their bravery put an end for ever to the taunts of cowardice which had been levelled against the colonists. "Are the Yankees cowards?" shouted the men of Massachusetts as the first English attack rolled back baffled down the hill-side. But a far truer courage was shown in the stubborn endurance with which Washington's raw militiamen, who gradually dwindled from sixteen thousand to ten, ill fed, ill armed, and with but forty-five rounds of ammunition to each man, cooped up through the winter a force of ten thousand veterans in the lines of Boston. The spring of 1776 saw them force these troops to withdraw from the city to New York, where the whole British army, largely reinforced by mercenaries from Germany, was concentrated under General Howe. Meanwhile a raid of the American General Arnold nearly drove the British troops from Canada; and though his attempt broke down before Quebec, it showed that all hope of reconciliation was over. The colonies of the south, the last to join in the struggle, had in fact expelled their Governors at the close of 1775; at the opening of the next year Massachusetts instructed its delegates to support a complete repudiation of the King's government by the Colonies; while the American ports were thrown open to the world in defiance of the Navigation Acts. These decisive steps were followed by the great act with which American history begins, the

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adoption on the 4th of July, 1776, by the delegates in Congress, after a fierce resistance from those of Pennsylvania and South Carolina, and in spite of the abstention of those of New York, of a Declaration of Independence. "We," ran its solemn words, "the representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, Free and Independent States."

But the earlier successes of the Colonists were soon followed by suffering and defeat. Howe, an active general with a fine army at his back, cleared Long Island in August by a victory at Brooklyn; and Washington, whose force was weakened by withdrawals and defeat and disheartened by the loyal tone of the State in which it was encamped, was forced in the autumn of 1776 to evacuate New York and New Jersey, and to fall back first on the Hudson and then on the Delaware. The Congress prepared to fly from Philadelphia, and a general despair showed itself in cries of peace. But a well-managed surprise and a daring march on the rear of Howe's army restored the spirits of Washington's men, and forced the English general in his turn to fall back on New York. England however was now roused to more serious efforts; and the campaign of 1777 opened with a combined attempt for the suppression of the revolt. An army which had assembled in Canada under General Burgoyne marched in June by way of the Lakes to seize the line of the Hudson. Howe meanwhile sailed up the Chesapeake and advanced on Philadelphia, the temporary capital of the United States and the seat of the Congress. The rout of his little army of seven thousand men at Brandywine forced Washington to abandon Philadelphia, and after a bold but unsuccessful attack on his victors to retire into winter quarters on the banks of the Schuylkill, where the unconquerable

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resolve with which he nerved his handful of beaten and half-starved troops to face Howe's army in their camp at Valley Forge is the noblest of his triumphs. But in the north the war had taken another colour. Burgoyne's movement had been planned in view of a junction with at least a part of Howe's army from New York; a junction which would have enabled him to seize the line of the Hudson and thus cut off New England from her sister provinces. But Howe was held fast by Washington's resistance and unable to send a man to the north; while the spirit of New England, which had grown dull as the war rolled away from its borders, quickened again at the news of invasion and of the outrages committed by the Indians employed among the English troops. Its militia hurried from town and homestead to a camp with which General Gates had barred the road to Albany; and after a fruitless attack on the American lines, Burgoyne saw himself surrounded on the heights of Saratoga. On the 17th of October his whole force was compelled to surrender.

France
and
America.

The news of this calamity gave force to the words with which Chatham at the very time of the surrender was pressing for peace. "You cannot conquer America," he cried when men were glorying in Howe's successes over Washington. "If I were an American as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never, never, never!" Then, in a burst of indignant eloquence he thundered against an outrage which was at that moment nerving New England to its rally against Burgoyne, the use of the Indian with his scalping-knife as an ally of England against her children. The proposals which Chatham brought forward might perhaps in his hands even yet have drawn America and the mother-country together. His plan was one of absolute conciliation. He looked forward to a federal union between the settlements and Great Britain which would have left the

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Colonies absolutely their own masters in all matters of internal government, and linked only by ties of affection and loyalty to the general body of the Empire. But the plan met with the same scornful rejection as his previous proposals. Its rejection was at once followed by the news of Saratoga, and by the yet more fatal news that this disaster had roused the Bourbon Courts to avenge the humiliation of the Seven Years' War. Crippled and impoverished as she was at its close, France could do nothing to break the world-power which was rising in front of her; but in the very moment of her defeat, the foresight of Choiseul had seen in a future struggle between England and her Colonies a chance of ruining the great fabric which Pitt's triumphs had built up. Nor was Pitt blind to the steady resolve of France to renew the fight. In every attempt which he had made to construct a Ministry he had laid down as the corner-stone of his foreign policy a renewal of that alliance with the Protestant States of North Germany against the House of Bourbon which could alone save England from the dangers of the Family Compact. But his efforts had been foiled alike by the resistance of the King, the timid peacefulness of the Whigs, and at last by the distrust of England which had been rooted in the mind of Frederick the Great through the treachery of Lord Bute.

The wisdom of his policy was now brought home by the coming of the danger he had foreseen when the foresight of Choiseul was justified by the outbreak of strife between England and America. Even then for a while France looked idly on. Her king, Lewis the Sixteenth, was averse from war; her treasury was empty; her government, scared by the growth of new movements towards freedom about it, and fearful of endangering the monarchy by the encouragement these would receive from a union with the revolted Colonies, still doubted whether America had any real power of resisting Britain. It was to no purpose that from the moment when they

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declared themselves independent, the United States called on France for aid; or that Franklin pressed their appeal on its government. A year in fact passed without any decisive resolution to give aid to the Colonists. But the steady drift of French policy and the passion of the French people pressed heavier every day on the hesitation of their government; and the news of Saratoga forced its hand. The American envoys at last succeeded in forming an alliance; and in February, 1778, a treaty offensive and defensive was concluded between France and America. Lord North strove to meet the blow by fresh offers of conciliation, and by a pledge to renounce for ever the right of direct taxation over the Colonies; but he felt that such offers were fruitless, that the time for conciliation was past, while all hope of reducing America by force of arms had disappeared. In utter despair he pressed his resignation on the King. But George was as obstinate for war as ever; and the country, stung to the quick by the attack of France, backed passionately the obstinacy of the King. But unlike George the Third, it instinctively felt that if a hope still remained of retaining the friendship of the Colonies and of baffling the efforts of the Bourbons, it lay in Lord Chatham; and in spite of the King's resistance the voice of the whole country called him back to power. The danger indeed which had scared Lord North into resignation, and before which a large party of the Whigs now advocated the acknowledgement of American independence, only woke Chatham to his old daring and fire. He had revolted from a war against Englishmen. But all his pride in English greatness, all his confidence in English power, woke afresh at the challenge of France. His genius saw indeed in the new danger a means of escape from the old. He would have withdrawn every soldier from America, and flung the whole force of Britain into the conflict with France. He believed that in the splendour of triumphs over her older enemy England might be brought to terms of amity which would win back the Colonies, and that the English blood

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of the Colonists themselves would be quickened to a fresh union with the mother-country by her struggle against a power from which she had so lately rescued them. Till such a trial had been made, with all the advantages that the magic of his name could give it in England and America alike, he would not bow to a need that must wreck the great Empire his hand had built up. Even at this hour there was a chance of success for such a policy; but on the eve of Chatham's return to office this chance was shattered by the hand of death. Broken with age and disease, the Earl was borne to the House of Lords on the seventh of April to utter in a few broken words his protest against the proposal to surrender America. "I rejoice," he murmured, "that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and noble monarchy. His Majesty succeeded to an Empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Seventeen years ago this people was the terror of the world." He listened impatiently to the reply of the Duke of Richmond, and again rose to his feet. But he had hardly risen when he pressed his hand upon his heart, and falling back in a swoon was borne home to die.

How well founded was Chatham's faith in the power of Britain was seen in the strife that opened. From the hour of his death England entered on a conflict with enemies whose circle gradually widened till she stood single-handed against the world. At the close of 1778 the Family Compact bore its full fruit; Spain joined the league of France and America against her; and in the next year the joint fleets of the two powers rode the masters of the Channel. They even threatened a descent on the English coast. But dead as Chatham was, his cry woke a new life in England. "Shall we fall prostrate," he exclaimed with his last breath, "before the House of Bourbon?" and the divisions which had broken the nation in its struggle with American liberty were hushed in the presence of this danger to its own existence. The weakness of the Ministry

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was compensated by the energy of England itself. For three years, from 1779 to 1782, General Elliott held against famine and bombardment from a French and Spanish army the rock fortress of Gibraltar. Although a quarrel over the right of search banded Holland and the Courts of the North in an armed neutrality against her, and added the Dutch fleet to the number of her assailants, England held her own at sea. In her Eastern dependency, where France sought a counterpoise to the power of Britain in that of the Mahrattas, freebooters of Hindoo blood whose tribes had for a century past carried their raids over India from the hills of the Western coast, and founded sovereignties in Guzerat, Malwa, and Tanjore, the tenacity and resource of Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of British India, wrested victory from failure and defeat. Though the wide schemes of conquest which he formed were for the moment frustrated, the annexation of Benares, the extension of British rule along the Ganges, the reduction of Oude to virtual dependence, the appearance of English armies in Central India, and the defeat of the Sultan of Mysore, laid the foundation of an Indian Empire which his genius was bold enough to foresee. Even in America the fortune of the war seemed for a while to turn. After Burgoyne's surrender the English generals had withdrawn from Pennsylvania, and bent all their efforts on the Southern States, where a strong Royalist party still existed. The capture of Charlestown and the successes of Lord Cornwallis in 1780 were rendered fruitless by the obstinate resistance of General Greene; but the United States remained weakened by bankruptcy and unnerved by hopes of aid from France.

America
and
Ireland.

Hardly a year however had passed when the face of the war in America was changed by a terrible disaster. Foiled in an attempt on North Carolina by the refusal of his fellow general, Sir Henry Clinton, to assist him, Cornwallis fell back in 1781 on Virginia, and entrenched himself in the lines of York Town. A sudden march of Washington brought

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him to the front of the English troops at a moment when the French fleet held the sea, and the British army was driven by famine in October to a surrender as humiliating as that of Saratoga. The news fell like a thunderbolt on the wretched Minister, who had till now suppressed at his master's order his own conviction of the uselessness of further bloodshed. Opening his arms and pacing wildly about the room, Lord North exclaimed, "It is all over," and resigned. At this moment indeed the country seemed on the brink of ruin. Humiliating as it was, England could have borne fifty such calamities as the surrender at York Town. But in the very crisis of the struggle with America she found herself confronted with a danger nearer home. The revolt of one great dependency brought with it a threatened revolt from another. In Ireland, as in the Colonies, England had shrunk from carrying out either a national or an imperial policy. She might have recognized Ireland as a free nationality, and bound it to herself by federal bonds; or she might have absorbed it, as she had absorbed Scotland, into the general mass of her own national life. With a perverse ingenuity she had not only refrained from taking either of these courses, but she had deliberately adopted the worst features of both. Ireland was absolutely subject to Britain, but she formed no part of it, she shared neither in its liberty nor its wealth. But on the other hand she was allowed no national existence of her own. While all the outer seeming of national life was left, while Ireland possessed in name an army, a Parliament, a magistracy, the mass of the Irish people was as strange to all this life as the savages of Polynesia. Every Catholic Irishman, and there were five Irish Catholics to every Irish Protestant, was treated as a stranger and a foreigner in his own country. The House of Lords, the House of Commons, the magistracy, all corporate offices in towns, all ranks in the army, the bench, the bar, the whole administration of government or justice, were closed against Catholics. The very right of voting for their representatives in Parliament was

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denied them. Few Catholic landowners had been left by the sweeping confiscations which had followed the successive revolts of the island, and oppressive laws forced even these few with scant exceptions to profess Protestantism. Necessity indeed had brought about a practical toleration of their religion and their worship; but in all social and political matters the native Catholics, in other words the immense majority of the people of Ireland, were simply hewers of wood and drawers of water for Protestant masters, for masters who still looked on themselves as mere settlers, who boasted of their Scotch or English extraction, and who regarded the name of "Irishman" as an insult.

But small as was this Protestant body, one-half of it fared little better as far as power was concerned than the Catholics. The Presbyterians, who formed the bulk of the Ulster settlers, were shut out by law from all civil, military, and municipal offices. The administration and justice of the country were thus kept rigidly in the hands of members of the Established Church, a body which comprised about a twelfth of the population of the island, while its government was practically monopolised by a few great Protestant landowners. The rotten boroughs which had originally been created to make the Irish Parliament dependent on the Crown, had by this time fallen under the influence of the adjacent landlords, whose command of these made them masters of the House of Commons while they themselves formed in person the House of Peers. To such a length had this system been carried that at the time of the Union more than sixty seats were in the hands of three families alone—those of the Hills, the Ponsonbys, and the Beresfords. One-half of the House of Commons, in fact, was returned by a small group of nobles, who were recognised as "parliamentary undertakers," and who undertook to "manage" Parliament on their own terms. Irish politics were for these men a mere means of public plunder; they were glutted with pensions, preferments, and bribes in hard cash in return

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for their services; they were the advisers of every Lord-Lieutenant and the practical governors of the country. The results were what might have been expected. For more than a century Ireland was the worst governed country in Europe. That its government was not even worse than it was, was due to its connexion with England and the subordination of its Parliament to the English Privy Council. The Irish Parliament had no power of originating legislative or financial measures, and could only say "yes" or "no" to Acts laid before it by the Privy Council in England. The English Parliament too claimed the right of binding Ireland as well as England by its enactments, and one of its statutes transferred the appellate jurisdiction of the Irish Peerage to the English House of Lords. Galling as these restrictions were to the plundering aristocracy of Ireland, they formed a useful check on its tyranny. But as if to compensate for the benefits of this protection England did her best from the time of William the Third to annihilate Irish commerce and to ruin Irish agriculture. Statutes passed by the jealousy of English landowners forbade the export of Irish cattle or sheep to English ports. The export of wool was forbidden lest it might interfere with the profits of English wool-growers. Poverty was thus added to the curse of misgovernment; and poverty deepened with the rapid growth of the native population, a growth due in great part to the physical misery and moral degradation of their lives, till famine turned the country into a hell.

The bitter lesson of the last conquest however long sufficed to check all dreams of revolt among the native Irish; and the outbreaks which sprang from time to time out of the general misery and discontent were purely social in their character, and were roughly repressed by the ruling class. When political revolt at last threatened English supremacy over Ireland, the threat came from the ruling class itself. Some timid efforts made by the English Government at the accession of George the Third

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to control its tyranny were resented by a refusal of money bills, and by a cry for the removal of the checks imposed on the independence of the Irish Parliament. But it was not till the American war that this cry became a political danger. The threat of a French invasion and the want of any regular force to oppose it compelled the Government to call on Ireland to provide for its own defence, and in answer to its call forty thousand volunteers appeared in arms in 1779. The force was wholly a Protestant one, commanded by Protestant officers, and it was turned to account by the Protestant oligarchy. Threats of an armed revolt backed the eloquence of two Parliamentary leaders, Grattan and Flood, in their demand for the repeal of Poyning's Act, which took all power of initiative legislation from the Irish Parliament, and for the recognition of the Irish House of Lords as an ultimate Court of Appeal. But the Volunteers were forced to bid for the support of the native Catholics, who looked with indifference on these quarrels of their masters, by claiming for them a relaxation of the penal laws against the exercise of their religion and of some of their most oppressive disabilities. So real was the danger that England was forced to give way. The first demands were in effect a claim for national independence. But there were no means of resisting them, for England was without a soldier to oppose the Volunteers, while she was pressed hard by the league of Europe and America against her. In the face of such a rising close at home, it became plain even to the most dogged of Tories that it was impossible to continue a strife across three thousand miles of sea; and to deal with the attitude of Ireland became even a more pressing need of the Ministry which followed that of Lord North than the need of dealing with America.

*End of
the war.*

The blow which had shattered the attempt of England to wield an autocratic power over her Colonies had shattered the attempt of its King to establish an autocratic power over England itself. The Ministry which bore the name

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of Lord North had been a mere screen for the administration of George the Third, and its ruin was the ruin of the system he had striven to build up. Never again was the Crown to possess such a power as he had wielded during the past ten years. For the moment however there was nothing to mark so decisive a change; and both to the King and his opponents it must have seemed only a new turn in the political game which they were playing when in March, 1782, the Whigs returned to office. Though the Tories and "King's friends" had now grown to a compact body of a hundred and fifty members, who still followed Lord North, the Whigs were superior to their rivals in numbers and political character, now that the return of the Bedford and Grenville sections to the general body of the party during its long and steady opposition to the war had restored much of its old cohesion. Rockingham was still its head; and on Rockingham fell the double task of satisfying Ireland and of putting an end, at any cost, to the war with the United States. The task involved in both quarters a humiliating surrender; for neither Ireland nor America would be satisfied save by a full concession of their claims. It needed the bitter stress of necessity to induce the English Parliament to follow Rockingham's counsels, but the need was too urgent to suffer their rejection. The Houses therefore abandoned by a formal statute the judicial and legislative supremacy they had till then asserted over the Parliament of Ireland; and from this moment England and Ireland were simply held together by the fact that the sovereign of the one island was also the sovereign of the other. The grant of independence to the one great dependency made it easier to recognise the freedom of the other. Rockingham in fact took office with the purpose of winning peace by a full acknowledgement of the independence of the United States, and negotiations were soon entered into for that purpose.

But America was bound by its league with the Bourbon *The Peace.*

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Courts to make no peace save one common to its allies, and from its allies peace was hard to win without concessions which would have stripped from England all that remained of her older greatness. With the revolt of Ireland and the surrender of Cornwallis the hopes of her enemies rose high. Spain refused to suspend hostilities at any other price than the surrender of Gibraltar; while France proposed that England should give up all her Indian conquests save Bengal. The triumph of the Bourbons indeed seemed secure. If terms like these were accepted the world-empire of Britain was at an end. Stripped of her Colonies in America, stripped of her rule in India, matched on the very ocean by rival fleets, England sank back into a European State, into the England of the first Georges. And yet there seemed little chance of her holding out against the demands of such a league as fronted her at a moment when her military power was paralyzed by the attitude of Ireland. But the true basis of her world-power lay on the sea. It was by her command of the sea that such an empire could alone be possible; nor was it possible so long as she commanded the sea for all the armies of the Bourbon powers to rob her of it. And at this moment the command of the seas again became her own. On the 16th of January, 1780, Admiral Rodney, the greatest of English seamen save Nelson and Blake, encountered the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, and only four of its vessels escaped to Cadiz. At the opening of 1782 the triumphs of the French admiral De Grasse called him to the West Indies; and on the 12th of April a manœuvre which he was the first to introduce broke his opponent's line, and drove the French fleet shattered from the Atlantic. With Rodney's last victory the struggle of the Bourbons was really over, for no means remained of attacking their enemy save at Gibraltar, and here a last attack of the joint force gathered against it was repulsed by the heroism of Elliott. Nor would America wait any longer for the satisfaction of her allies.

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In November her commissioners signed the preliminaries of a peace in which Britain reserved to herself on the American continent only Canada and the island of Newfoundland; and acknowledged without reserve the independence of the United States.

The action of America ended the war; and the treaty of peace with the United States was a prelude to treaties of peace with the Bourbon powers. Their actual gains were insignificant. France indeed won nothing in the treaties with which the war ended; Spain gained only Florida and Minorca. Nor could they feel even in this hour of their triumph that the end at which they aimed had been fully reached. In half their great effort against the world-power of Britain they had utterly failed. She had even won ground in India. In America itself she still retained the northern dominion of Canada. Her West Indian islands remained intact. Above all she had asserted more nobly than ever her command of the sea, and with it the possibility of building up a fresh power in such lands as Cook had called her to. But at the close of the war there was less thought of what she had retained than of what she had lost. She was parted from her American Colonies; and at the moment such a parting seemed to be the knell of her greatness. In wealth, in population, the American Colonies far surpassed all that remained of her Empire; and the American Colonies were irrecoverably gone. It is no wonder that in the first shock of such a loss England looked on herself as on the verge of ruin, or that the Bourbon Courts believed her position as a world-power to be practically at an end. How utterly groundless such a conception was the coming years were to show. The energies of England were in fact spurred to new efforts by the crisis in her fortunes. The industrial development which followed the war gave her a material supremacy such as she had never known before, and the rapid growth of wealth which this industry brought with it raised her again into a mother of nations as her settlers built up in

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the waters of the Pacific Colonies as great as those which she had lost on the coast of America. But if the Bourbons overrated their triumph in one way, they immensely underrated it in another. Whatever might be the importance of American independence in the history of England, it was of unequalled moment in the history of the world. If it crippled for a while the supremacy of the English nation, it founded the supremacy of the English race. From the hour of American Independence the life of the English People has flowed not in one current, but in two; and while the older has shown little signs of lessening, the younger has fast risen to a greatness which has changed the face of the world. In 1783 America was a nation of three millions of inhabitants, scattered thinly along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. It is now a nation of forty millions, stretching over the whole continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In wealth and material energy, as in numbers, it far surpasses the mother-country from which it sprang. It is already the main branch of the English People; and in the days that are at hand the main current of that people's history must run along the channel not of the Thames or the Mersey, but of the Hudson and the Mississippi. But distinct as these currents are, every year proves more clearly that in spirit the English People is one. The distance that parted England from America lessens every day. The ties that unite them grow every day stronger. The social and political differences that threatened a hundred years ago to form an impassable barrier between them grow every day less. Against this silent and inevitable drift of things the spirit of narrow isolation on either side the Atlantic struggles in vain. It is possible that the two branches of the English people will remain for ever separate political existences. It is likely enough that the older of them may again break in twain, and that the English People in the Pacific may assert as distinct a national life as the two English Peoples on either side the Atlantic. But the spirit, the influence,

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of all these branches will remain one. And in thus remaining one, before half a century is over it will change the face of the world. As two hundred millions of Englishmen fill the valley of the Mississippi, as fifty millions of Englishmen assert their lordship over Australasia, this vast power will tell through Britain on the old world of Europe, whose nations will have shrunk into insignificance before it. What the issues of such a world-wide change may be, not even the wildest dreamer would dare to dream. But one issue is inevitable. In the centuries that lie before us, the primacy of the world will lie with the English People. English institutions, English speech, English thought, will become the main features of the political, the social, and the intellectual life of mankind.

Handwritten:
Historians should be prophets.

CHAPTER III.

INDUSTRIAL ENGLAND.

1782—1792.

*England
in the
American
War.*

THAT in the creation of the United States the world had reached one of the turning points in its history seems at the time to have entered into the thought of not a single European statesman. What startled men most at the moment was the discovery that England herself was far from being ruined by the greatness of her defeat. She rose from it indeed stronger and more vigorous than ever. Never had she shown a mightier energy than in the struggle against France which followed only ten years after her loss of America, nor did she ever stand higher among the nations than on the day of Waterloo. Her internal developement was as imposing as her outer grandeur. Weary and disgraceful indeed as was the strife with the Colonies, the years of its progress were years of as mighty a revolution for the mother-country as for its child. The England that is about us dates from the American War. It was then that the moral, the philanthropic, the religious ideas which have moulded English society into its present shape first broke the spiritual torpor of the eighteenth century. It was then that with the wider diffusion of intelligence our literature woke to a nobler and larger life which fitted it to become the mouth-piece of every national emotion. It was then that by a

change unparalleled in history the country laid aside her older agricultural character to develop industrial forces which made her at a single bound the workshop of the world. Amidst the turmoil of the early years of George the Third Brindley was silently covering England with canals, and Watt as silently perfecting his invention of the steam-engine. It was amidst the strife with America that Adam Smith regenerated our economical, Gibbon our historical, and Burke our political literature; and peace was hardly declared when the appearance of Crabbe, Cowper, and Burns heralded a new birth of our poetry.

No names so illustrious as these marked the more silent but even deeper change in the religious temper of the country. It dates, as we have seen, from the work of the Wesleys, but the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy; and the "Evangelical" movement, which found representatives like Newton and Cecil within the pale of the Establishment, made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In Walpole's day the English clergy were the idlest and the most lifeless in the world. In our own time no body of religious ministers surpasses them in piety, in philanthropic energy, or in popular regard. But the movement was far from being limited to the Methodists or the clergy. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm which, rigid and pedantic as it often seemed, was still healthy in its social tone, and whose power showed itself in a gradual disappearance of the profligacy which had disgraced the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A yet nobler result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor. It was not till the Wesleyan impulse had done its work that this philanthropic impulse began. The Sunday

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Schools established by Mr. Raikes of Gloucester at the close of the century were the beginnings of popular education. By writings and by her own personal example Hannah More drew the sympathy of England to the poverty and crime of the agricultural labourer. A passionate impulse of human sympathy with the wronged and afflicted raised hospitals, endowed charities, built churches, sent missionaries to the heathen, supported Burke in his plea for the Hindoo, and Clarkson and Wilberforce in their crusade against the iniquity of the slave trade.

Howard.

It is only the moral chivalry of his labours that amongst a crowd of philanthropists draws us most to the work and character of John Howard. The sympathy which all were feeling for the sufferings of mankind Howard felt for the sufferings of the worst and most hapless of men. With wonderful ardour and perseverance he devoted himself to the cause of the debtor, the felon, and the murderer. An appointment to the office of High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in 1774 drew his attention to the state of the prisons which were placed under his care; and from that time the quiet country gentleman, whose only occupation had been reading his Bible and studying his thermometer, became the most energetic and zealous of reformers. Before a year was over he had personally visited almost every English gaol, and in nearly all of them he found frightful abuses which had been noticed half a century before, but which had been left unredressed by Parliament. Gaolers who bought their places were paid by fees, and suffered to extort what they could. Even when acquitted, men were dragged back to their cells for want of funds to discharge the sums they owed to their keepers. Debtors and felons were huddled together in the prisons which Howard found crowded by the legislation of the day. No separation was preserved between different sexes, no criminal discipline was enforced. Every gaol was a chaos of cruelty and the foulest immorality, from which the prisoner could only

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escape by sheer starvation or through the gaol-fever that festered without ceasing in these haunts of misery. Howard saw everything with his own eyes, he tested every suffering by his own experience. In one prison he found a cell so narrow and noisome that the poor wretch who inhabited it begged as a mercy for hanging. Howard shut himself up in the cell and bore its darkness and foulness till nature could bear no more. It was by work of this sort and by the faithful pictures of such scenes which it enabled him to give that he brought about their reform. The book in which he recorded his terrible experience and the plans which he submitted for the reformation of criminals made him the father, so far as England is concerned, of prison discipline. But his labours were far from being confined to England. In journey after journey he visited the gaols of Holland and Germany, till his longing to discover some means of checking the fatal progress of the Plague led him to examine the lazarettos of Europe and the East. He was still engaged in this work of charity when he was seized by a malignant fever at Cherson in Southern Russia, and "laid quietly in the earth," as he desired.

In Howard's later labours the new sentiment of humanity had carried him far beyond the bounds of national sympathy; and forces at once of pity and religion told more and more in begetting a consciousness of the common brotherhood of man. Even at the close of the American war this feeling had become strong enough to colour our political life. It told on the attitude of England towards its great dependency of India. Discussions over rival plans of Indian administration diffused a sense of national responsibility for its good government, and there was a general resolve that the security against injustice and misrule which was enjoyed by the poorest Englishman should be enjoyed by the poorest Hindoo. It was this resolve which expressed itself in 1786 in the trial of Warren Hastings. Hastings returned from India at the

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close of the war with the hope of rewards as great as those of Clive. He had saved all that Clive had won. He had laid the foundation of a vast empire in the East. He had shown rare powers of administration, and the foresight, courage, and temperance which mark the born ruler of men. But with him came rumours of tyranny and wrong. Even those who admitted the wisdom and glory of his rule shrank from its terrible ruthlessness. He was charged with having sold for a vast sum the services of British troops to crush the free tribes of the Rohillas, with having wrung half a million by extortion from the Rajah of Benares, with having extorted by torture and starvation more than a million from the Princesses of Oude. He was accused of having kept his hold upon power by measures as unscrupulous, and with having murdered a native who opposed him by an abuse of the forms of English law. On almost all these charges the cooler judgement of later enquirers has acquitted Warren Hastings of guilt. Personally there can be little doubt that he had done much to secure to the new subjects of Britain a just and peaceable government. What was hardest and most pitiless in his rule had been simply a carrying out of the system of administration which was native to India and which he found existing there. But such a system was alien from the new humanity of Englishmen; and few dared to vindicate Hastings when Burke in words of passionate earnestness moved for his impeachment.

*The
Slave
Trade.*

The great trial lingered on for years; and in the long run Hastings secured an acquittal. But the end at which the impeachment aimed had really been won. The attention, the sympathy of Englishmen had been drawn across distant seas to a race utterly strange to them; and the peasant of Cornwall or Cumberland had learned how to thrill at the suffering of a peasant of Bengal. And even while the trial was going on a yet wider extension of English sympathy made itself felt. The hero-seamen

of Elizabeth had not blushed to make gain out of kidnapping negroes and selling them into slavery. One of the profits which England bought by the triumphs of Marlborough was a right to a monopoly of the slave trade between Africa and the Spanish dominions; and it was England that had planted slavery in her American colonies and her West Indian islands. Half the wealth of Liverpool, in fact, was drawn from the traffic of its merchants in human flesh. The horrors and iniquity of the trade, the ruin and degradation of Africa which it brought about, the oppression of the negro himself, had till now moved no pity among Englishmen. But as the spirit of humanity told on the people this apathy suddenly disappeared. Philanthropy allied itself with the new religious movement in an attack on the slave trade. At the close of the American war its evils began to be felt so widely and deeply that the question forced itself into politics. "After a conversation in the open air at the root of an old tree, just above the steep descent into the Vale of Keston," with the younger Pitt, his friend, William Wilberforce, whose position as a representative of the evangelical party gave weight to his advocacy of such a cause, resolved to bring in a bill for the abolition of the slave trade. The bill which he brought forward in 1788 fell before the opposition of the Liverpool slave merchants and the general indifference of the House of Commons. But the movement gathered fresh strength in the country with every year; in spite of the absorption of England in the struggle with the French Revolution, it succeeded at last in forcing on Parliament the abolition of the traffic in slaves; and this abolition was followed a few years later by the abolition of slavery itself.

Time was to show how wide were the issues to which this religious development and the sentiment of humanity which it generated were to tend. But at the moment they told less directly and immediately on the political and

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social life of England than an industrial revolution which accompanied them. Though England already stood in the first rank of commercial states at the accession of George the Third, her industrial life at home was mainly agricultural. The growth of her manufactures was steady, but it continued to be slow; they gave employment as yet to but a small part of the population, and added in no great degree to the national wealth. The wool-trade remained the largest, as it was the oldest of them; it had gradually established itself in Norfolk, the West Riding of Yorkshire, and the counties of the south-west; while the manufacture of cotton was still almost limited to Manchester and Bolton, and though winning on its rival remained so unimportant that in the middle of the eighteenth century the export of cotton goods hardly reached the value of fifty thousand a year. There was the same slow and steady progress in the linen trade of Belfast and Dundee, and the silks of Spitalfields. But as yet textile manufactures contributed little to the national resources; nor did these resources owe much to the working of our minerals. The coal trade was small, and limited by the cost of carriage as well as by ignorance of any mode of employing coal in iron-smelting. On the other hand the scarcity of wood, which was used for that purpose, limited the production of iron. In 1750 only eighteen thousand tons were produced in England; and four-fifths of its iron goods were imported from Sweden. Nor did there seem any likelihood of a rapid change. Skilled labour was scarce; and the processes of manufacture were too rude to allow any large increase of production. It was only where a stream gave force to turn a mill-wheel that the wool-worker could establish his factory; and cotton was as yet spun by hand in the cottages, the "spinsters" of the family sitting with their distaffs round the weaver's handloom.

Canals. But even had the processes of production become more efficient, they would have been rendered useless by the inefficiency of the means of distribution. The older main

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roads, which had lasted fairly through the middle ages, had broken down in later times before the growth of traffic and the increase of wagons and carriages. The new lines of trade lay often along mere country lanes which had never been more than horse-tracks, and to drive heavy wains through lanes like these was all but impossible. Much of the woollen trade therefore had to be carried on by means of long trains of pack-horses; and in most cases the cost of carriage added heavily to the price of production. In the case of yet heavier goods, such as coal, distribution was almost impracticable, save along the greater rivers or in districts accessible from the sea. But at the moment when England was just plunging into the Seven Years' War the enterprize of a duke and a millwright solved this problem of carriage, and started the country on a mighty course of industry which was to change both its social and its political character. Francis, Duke of Bridgewater, was a shy, dreamy man, whom a disappointment in love drove to a life of isolation on his estates in the north. He was the possessor of collieries at Worsley whose value depended on their finding a market at the neighbouring town of Manchester; and it was to bring his coal to this market that he resolved to drive a canal from the mine to the river Irwell. With singular good luck he found the means of carrying out his design in a self-taught mechanic, James Brindley. But in Brindley's mind the scheme widened far beyond the plans of the duke. Canals, as he conceived them, were no longer to serve as mere adjuncts to rivers; on the contrary, "rivers were only meant," he said, "to feed canals;" and instead of ending in the Irwell, he carried the duke's canal by an aqueduct across that river to Manchester itself. What Brindley had discovered was in fact the water-road, a means of carrying heavy goods with the least resistance, and therefore the least cost, from the point of production to the point of sale; and England at once seized on his discovery to free itself from the bondage in which it had been held. From the year

CHAP. III. 1767, when Brindley completed his enterprize, a network of such water-roads was flung over the country; and before the movement had spent its force Great Britain alone was traversed in every direction by three thousand miles of navigable canals.

*Mineral
developement.*

To English trade the canal opened up the richest of all markets, the market of England itself. Every part of the country was practically thrown open to the manufacturer: and the impulse which was given by this facility of carriage was at once felt in a vast developement of production. But such a developement would have been impossible had not the discovery of this new mode of distribution been accompanied by the discovery of a new productive force. In the coal which lay beneath her soil England possessed a store of force which had hitherto remained almost useless. But its effects were now to make themselves felt. The first instance of the power of coal was shown in utilizing the stores of iron which had lain side by side with it in the northern counties, but which had lain there unworked through the scarcity of wood, which was looked upon as the only fuel by which it could be smelted. In the middle of the eighteenth century a process for smelting iron with coal turned out to be effective; and the whole aspect of the iron-trade was at once revolutionized. In fifty years the annual production of iron in Great Britain rose from under twenty thousand to more than one hundred and seventy thousand tons. During the fifty years that followed it rose to six millions of tons. Iron was to become the working material of the modern world; and it is its production of iron which more than all else has placed England at the head of industrial Europe. But iron was not the only metal which coal drew from the soil to swell the national wealth. The increase in its production was rivalled by that of lead, copper, and tin; and the 'mining districts' soon gathered a population which raised them into social as well as economical importance.

But it was not in its direct application to metallurgy that coal was destined to produce its most amazing effects. What was needed to turn England into a manufacturing country was some means of transforming the force stored up in coal into a labour force; and it was this transformation which was now brought about through the agency of steam. Engines in which steam was used as a means of draining mines had long been in use; but the power relied on was mainly that of the weight of the air pressing on a piston beneath which a vacuum had been created by the condensation of steam; and the economical use of such engines was checked by the waste of fuel which resulted from the cooling of the cylinder at each condensation, and from the expenditure of heat in again raising it to its old temperature before a fresh stroke of the piston was possible. Both these obstacles were removed by the ingenuity of James Watt. Watt was a working engineer at Glasgow, whose mind had for some time been bent on the improvement of the steam-engine; but it was not till the spring of 1765, amidst the political turmoil which characterized the early reign of George the Third, that as he strolled on a Sunday afternoon across the Green of Glasgow the means of effecting it burst on him. "I had gone," he says, "to take a walk on a fine Sabbath afternoon. I had entered the Green by the gate at the foot of Charlotte Street, and had passed the old washing-house. I was thinking upon the engine at the time, and had got as far as the herd's house, when the idea came into my mind that as steam was an elastic body it would rush into a vacuum, and if a communication were made between the cylinder and an exhausted vessel it would rush into it, and might there be condensed without cooling the cylinder. I had not walked farther than the Golf-House when the whole thing was arranged in my mind." The employment of a separate condenser, with the entire discarding of any other force in its action save that of steam itself, changed the whole conditions of the steam-engine. On the eve of

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tures.

the American war, in 1776, its use passed beyond the mere draining of mines; and it was rapidly adopted as a motive-force for all kinds of manufacturing industry.

The almost unlimited supply of labour-power in the steam-engine came at a time when the existing supply of manual labour was proving utterly inadequate to cope with the demands of the manufacturer. This was especially the case in textile fabrics. In its earlier stages the manufacture of cotton had been retarded by the difficulty with which the weavers obtained a sufficient supply of cotton yarn from the spinsters; and this difficulty became yet greater when the invention of the fly-shuttle enabled one weaver to do in a single day what had hitherto been the work of two. The difficulty was solved by a Blackburn weaver, John Hargreaves, who noticed that his wife's spindle, which had been accidentally upset, continued to revolve in an upright position on the floor, while the thread was still spinning in her hand. The hint led him to connect a number of spindles with a single wheel, and thus to enable one spinster to do the work of eight. Hargreaves' invention only spurred the wits of a barber's assistant, Richard Arkwright, to a yet greater improvement in the construction of a machine for spinning by rollers revolving at different rates of speed; and this in its turn was improved and developed in the "mule" of a Bolton weaver, Samuel Crompton. The result of these inventions was to reverse the difficulty which hampered the trade, for the supply of yarn became so rapid and unlimited as to outrun the power of the hand-loom weaver to consume it; but a few years after the close of the American war this difficulty was met by the discovery of the power-loom, which replaced the weaver by machinery. Ingenious however as these inventions were, they would have remained comparatively useless had it not been for the revelation of a new and inexhaustible labour-force in the steam-engine. It was the combination of such a force with such means of applying it that enabled

Britain during the terrible years of her struggle with France and Napoleon to all but monopolise the woollen and cotton trades, and raised her into the greatest manufacturing country that the world had seen.

How mighty a force this industrial revolution was to exert on English politics and English society time was to show. By the transfer of wealth and population from southern to northern England, and from the country to the town, it was in the next fifty years to set on foot a revolution in both, the results of which have still to be disclosed. Of such a revolution no English statesman as yet had a glimpse; but already the growth of industrial energy and industrial wealth was telling on the conditions of English statesmanship. The manufacturer and the merchant were coming fast to the front; and their temper was more menacing to the monopoly of political power by the Whigs and the landed aristocracy whom the Whigs represented than the temper of the King himself. Already public opinion was finding in them a new concentration and weight; and it was certain that as the representatives of public opinion they would at last demand a share in the work of government. Such a demand might have been delayed for a while had they been content with the way in which England was governed. But they were far from being content with it. To no class indeed could the selfishness, the corruption, the factiousness, and the administrative inefficiency of the ruling order be more utterly odious. Their tone was moral, and they were influenced more and more by the religious and philanthropic movement about them. As men of business, they revolted against the waste and mismanagement which seemed to have become normal in every department of government. Their patriotism, their pride in England's greatness, alienated them from men who looked upon political eminence as a means of personal gain. Above all their personal energy, their consciousness of wealth and power, and to some extent the natural jealousy of the trader against the country gentleman, urged

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them to press for an overthrow of the existing monopoly, and for a fairer distribution of political influence. But such a pressure could only bring them into conflict with the Whigs whom the fall of Lord North had recalled to office. Though the Tories had now grown to a compact body of a hundred and fifty members, the Whigs still remained superior to their rivals in numbers and ability as well as in distinctness of political aim; for the return of the Bedford section to the general body of the party, as well as its steady opposition to the American war, had restored much of their early cohesion. But this reunion only strengthened their aristocratic and exclusive tendencies, and widened the breach which was steadily opening on questions such as Parliamentary Reform between the bulk of the Whigs and the small fragment of their party which remained true to the more popular sympathies of Chatham.

William
Pitt.

Lord Shelburne stood at the head of the Chatham party, and it was reinforced at this moment by the entry into Parliament of the second and youngest son of Chatham himself. William Pitt had hardly reached his twenty-second year; but he left college with the learning of a ripe scholar, and his ready and sonorous eloquence had been matured by his father's teaching. "He will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member to Charles Fox, the Whig leader in the Commons, after Pitt's earliest speech in that house. "He is so already," replied Fox. Young as he was, the haughty self-esteem of the new statesman breathed in every movement of his tall, spare figure, in the hard lines of a countenance which none but his closer friends saw lighted by a smile, in his cold and repulsive address, his invariable gravity of demeanour, and his habitual air of command. But none knew how great the qualities were which lay beneath this haughty exterior; nor had any one guessed how soon this "boy," as his rivals mockingly styled him, was to crush every opponent and to hold England at his will. There was only a smile of wonder when he refused

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any of the minor posts which were offered him in the Rockingham administration, and the wonder passed into angry sarcasms as soon as it was known that he claimed, if he took office at all, to be at once admitted to the Cabinet. But Pitt had no desire to take office under Rockingham. He was the inheritor of that side of his father's policy which was most distasteful to the Whigs. To him as to Chatham the main lesson of the war was the need of putting an end to those abuses in the composition of Parliament by which George the Third had been enabled to plunge the country into it. A thorough reform of the House of Commons was the only effectual means of doing this, and Pitt brought forward a bill founded on his father's plans for that purpose. But though a more liberal section of the Whigs, with Charles Fox at their head, were wavering round to a wish for reform, the great bulk of the party could not nerve themselves to the sacrifice of property and influence which such a reform would involve. Rockingham remained hostile to reform, and Burke, whose influence still told much upon Rockingham, was yet more hostile than his chief. Pitt's bill therefore was thrown out. In its stead the Ministry endeavoured to weaken the means of corrupt influence which the King had unscrupulously used by disqualifying persons holding government contracts from sitting in Parliament, by depriving revenue officers of the elective franchise (a measure which diminished the weight of the Crown in seventy boroughs), and above all by a bill for the reduction of the civil establishment, of the pension list, and of the secret service fund, which was brought in by Burke. These measures were to a great extent effectual in diminishing the influence of the Crown over Parliament, and they are memorable as marking the date when the direct bribery of members absolutely ceased. But they were utterly inoperative in rendering the House of Commons really representative of or responsible to the people of England.

CHAP. III. The jealousy which the mass of the Whigs entertained of the followers of Chatham and their plans was more plainly shown however on the death of Lord Rockingham in July. Shelburne, who had hitherto served as Secretary of State, was called by the King to the head of the Ministry, a post to which his eminent talents and the ability which he was showing in the negotiations for the Peace clearly gave him a title. But Shelburne had been hampered in these negotiations by the jealousy of Charles Fox, who as joint Secretary of State with him claimed in spite of usage a share in conducting them, and who persisted without a show of reason in believing himself to have been unfairly treated. It was on personal grounds therefore that Fox refused to serve under Shelburne; but the refusal of Burke and the bulk of Rockingham's followers was based on more than personal grounds. It sprang from a rooted distrust of the more popular tendencies of which Shelburne was justly regarded as the representative. To Pitt, on the other hand, these tendencies were the chief ground of confidence in the new Ministry; and young as he was, he at once entered office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. But his tenure of this post was a brief one. The Shelburne Ministry in fact only lasted long enough to conclude the final peace with the United States on the base of their independence; for in the opening of 1783 it was overthrown by the most unscrupulous coalition known in our history, a union of the Whig followers of Fox united with the Tories who still clung to Lord North. In Parliament such a coalition was irresistible, and the resignation of Shelburne at once made way for an administration in which both the triumphant parties were represented. But the effect on England at large was very different. Whatever new credit the Whigs had gained with the country during their long exclusion from office had been due to their steady denunciation of the policy and temper of Lord North's administration. That they should take office

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hand in hand with men whom they had for years denounced as the worst of Ministers shocked even their most loyal adherents; and the shock was the greater that a new seriousness in politics, a longing for a deeper and more earnest treatment of political questions, was making mere faction intolerable to Englishmen. But behind all this was the sense that something more than mere faction had really brought the two parties together. It was their common dread of the popular tendencies which Shelburne's Ministry represented, their common hatred of parliamentary reform, which hushed for the moment the bitter hostility between the followers of Rockingham and the followers of North. Yet never had the need of representative reform been more clearly shown than by a coalition which proved how powerless was the force of public opinion to check even the most shameless faction in Parliament, how completely the lessening of royal influence by the measures of Burke and Rockingham had tended to the profit not of the people but of the borough-mongers who usurped its representation. The turn of public opinion was quick in disclosing itself. Fox was the most popular of the Whigs, but he was hooted from the platform when he addressed his constituents at Westminster. Pitt, on the other hand, whose attacks on the new union rose to a lofty and indignant eloquence, was lifted by it into an almost solitary greatness.

But in Parliament Pitt was as powerless as he was influential in the country. His renewed proposal of Parliamentary Reform, though he set aside the disfranchisement of rotten boroughs as a violation of private property, and limited himself to the disfranchisement of boroughs convicted of corruption, and to the addition of one hundred members to the county representation, was rejected by a majority of two to one. Secure in their parliamentary majority, and heedless of the power of public opinion outside the walls of the House of Commons, the new Ministers entered boldly on a greater task than had as yet

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taxed the constructive genius of English statesmen. To leave such a dominion as Warren Hastings had built up in India to the control of a mere Company of traders was clearly impossible; and Fox proposed to transfer its political government from the Directors of the Company to a board of seven Commissioners. The appointment of the seven was vested in the first instance in Parliament, and afterwards in the Crown; their office was to be held for five years, but they were removable on address from either House of Parliament. The proposal was at once met with a storm of opposition. The scheme indeed was an injudicious one; for the new Commissioners would have been destitute of that practical knowledge of India which belonged to the Company, while the want of any immediate link between them and the actual Ministry of the Crown would have prevented Parliament from exercising an effective control over their acts. But the real faults of this India Bill were hardly noticed in the popular outcry against it. It had challenged the hostility of powerful influences. The merchant-class was galled by the blow levelled at the greatest merchant-body in the realm: corporations trembled at the cancelling of a charter; the King viewed the measure as a mere means of transferring the patronage of India to the Whigs. But it might have defied the opposition of corporations and the King had it not had to meet the bitter hostility of the nation at large. With the nation the faults of the bill lay not in this detail or that, but in the character of the Ministry which proposed it. To give the rule and patronage of India over to the existing House of Commons was to give a new and immense power to a body which misused in the grossest way the power it possessed. It was the sense of this popular feeling which encouraged the King to exert his personal influence to defeat the measure in the Lords, and on its defeat to order his Ministers to deliver up the seals. The unpopularity of Shelburne stood in the way of his resumption of office,

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and in December 1783 Pitt accepted the post of First Lord of the Treasury. His position would at once have been untenable had the country gone with its nominal representatives. He was defeated again and again by large majorities in the Commons; but the majorities dwindled as a shower of addresses from every quarter, from the Tory University of Oxford as from the Whig Corporation of London, proved that public opinion went with the Minister and not with the House. It was the general sense of this that justified Pitt in the firmness with which, in the teeth of addresses for his removal from office, he delayed the dissolution of Parliament for five months, and gained time for that ripening of the national sentiment on which he counted for success. When the election of 1784 came the struggle was at once at an end. The public feeling took a strength which broke through the corrupt influences that commonly governed its representation. Every great constituency, the counties and the large towns, returned supporters of Pitt. Of the majority which had defeated him in the Commons, a hundred and sixty members were unseated. Fox hardly retained his seat for Westminster, Burke lost his seat for Bristol, and only a fragment of the Whig party was saved by its command of nomination boroughs.

When Parliament came together after the overthrow of the Coalition, the Minister of twenty-five was master of England as no Minister had been before. Even George the Third yielded to his sway, partly through gratitude for the triumph he had won for him, partly from a sense of the madness which was soon to strike him down, but still more from a gradual discovery that the triumph which he had won over his political rivals had been won, not to the profit of the crown, but of the nation at large. The Whigs, it was true, were broken, unpopular, and without a policy; while the Tories, whom the Coalition had disgusted with Lord North, as it had estranged Fox from their opponents, clung to the Minister who had "saved the

*Pitt's
temper.*

CHAP. III. King." But it was the support of a new political power
Industrial that really gave his strength to the young Minister. The
England. sudden rise of English industry was pushing the manu-
1782- facturer to the front; and the manufacturer pinned his
1792. faith from the first in William Pitt. All that the trading
classes loved in Chatham, his nobleness of temper, his
consciousness of power, his patriotism, his sympathy with
a wider world than the world within the Parliamen-
thouse, they saw in his son. He had little indeed of the
poetic and imaginative side of Chatham's genius, of his
quick perception of what was just and what was possible,
his far-reaching conceptions of national policy, his outlook
into the future of the world. Pitt's flowing and sonorous
commonplaces rang hollow beside the broken phrases
which still make his father's eloquence a living thing to
Englishmen. On the other hand he possessed some
qualities in which Chatham was utterly wanting. His
temper, though naturally ardent and sensitive, had been
schooled in a proud self-command. His simplicity and
good taste freed him from his father's ostentation and
extravagance. Diffuse and commonplace as his speeches
seem to the reader, they were adapted as much by their
very qualities of diffuseness and commonplace as by their
lucidity and good sense to the intelligence of the classes
whom Pitt felt to be his real audience. In his love of
peace, his immense industry, his despatch of business, his
skill in debate, his knowledge of finance, he recalled Sir
Robert Walpole; but he had virtues which Walpole never
possessed, and he was free from Walpole's worst defects.
He was careless of personal gain. He was too proud to
rule by corruption. His lofty self-esteem left no room for
any jealousy of subordinates. He was generous in his
appreciation of youthful merits; and the "boys" he
gathered round him, such as Canning and Lord Wellesley,
rewarded his generosity by a devotion which death left
untouched. With Walpole's cynical inaction Pitt had no
sympathy whatever. His policy from the first was a policy

of active reform, and he faced every one of the problems, CHAP. III.
financial, constitutional, religious, from which Walpole had
shrunk. Above all he had none of Walpole's scorn of his
fellow-men. The noblest feature in his mind was its wide
humanity. His love for England was as deep and personal
as his father's love, but of the sympathy with English
passion and English prejudice which had been at once his
father's weakness and strength he had not a trace. When
Fox taunted him with forgetting Chatham's jealousy of
France and his faith that she was the natural foe of
England, Pitt answered nobly that "to suppose any nation
can be unalterably the enemy of another is weak and
childish."

The temper of the time, and the larger sympathy of
man with man which especially marks the eighteenth
century as a turning point in the history of the human
race, was everywhere bringing to the front a new order of
statesmen, such as Turgot and Joseph the Second, whose
characteristics were a love of mankind, and a belief that
as the happiness of the individual can only be secured by
the general happiness of the community to which he
belongs, so the welfare of individual nations can only be
secured by the general welfare of the world. Of these
Pitt was one. But he rose high above the rest in the
consummate knowledge and the practical force which he
brought to the realization of his aims. His strength lay
in finance; and he came forward at a time when the
growth of English wealth made a knowledge of finance
essential to a great Minister. The progress of the nation
was wonderful. Population more than doubled during
the eighteenth century, and the advance of wealth was
even greater than that of population. Though the war
had added a hundred millions to the national debt, the
burden was hardly felt. The loss of America only in-
creased the commerce with that country, and industry, as
we have seen, had begun that great career which was to
make England the workshop of the world. To deal wisely

His
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with such a growth required a knowledge of the laws of wealth which would have been impossible at an earlier time. But it had become possible in the days of Pitt. If books are to be measured by the effect which they have produced on the fortunes of mankind, the "Wealth of Nations" must rank among the greatest of books. Its author was Adam Smith, an Oxford scholar and a professor at Glasgow. Labour, he contended, was the one source of wealth, and it was by freedom of labour, by suffering the worker to pursue his own interest in his own way, that the public wealth would best be promoted. Any attempt to force labour into artificial channels, to shape by laws the course of commerce, to promote special branches of industry in particular countries, or to fix the character of the intercourse between one country and another, is not only a wrong to the worker or the merchant, but actually hurtful to the wealth of a state. The book was published in 1776, at the opening of the American war, and studied by Pitt during his career as an undergraduate at Cambridge. From that time he owned Adam Smith for his master; and he had hardly become Minister before he took the principles of the "Wealth of Nations" as the groundwork of his policy.

Pitt and
Parlia-
mentary
reform.

It was thus that the ten earlier years of Pitt's rule marked a new point of departure in English statesmanship. He was the first English Minister who really grasped the part which industry was to play in promoting the welfare of the world. He was not only a peace Minister and a financier, as Walpole had been but a statesman who saw that the best security for peace lay in the freedom and widening of commercial intercourse between nations; that public economy not only lessened the general burdens but left additional capital in the hands of industry; and that finance might be turned from a mere means of raising revenue into a powerful engine of political and social improvement. That little was done by Pitt himself to carry these

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principles into effect was partly owing to the mass of ignorance and prejudice with which he had to contend and still more to the sudden break of his plans through the French Revolution. His power rested above all on the trading classes, and these were still persuaded that wealth meant gold and silver, and that commerce was best furthered by jealous monopolies. It was only by patience and dexterity that the mob of merchants and country squires who backed him in the House of Commons could be brought to acquiesce in the changes he proposed. How small his power was when it struggled with the prejudices around him was seen in the failure of the first great measure he brought forward. The question of parliamentary reform which had been mooted during the American war had been coming steadily to the front. Chatham had advocated an increase of county members, who were then the most independent part of the Lower House. The Duke of Richmond talked of universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, and annual Parliaments. Wilkes anticipated the Reform Bill of a later time by proposing to disfranchise the rotten boroughs, and to give members in their stead to the counties and to the more populous and wealthy towns. William Pitt had made the question his own by bringing forward a motion for reform on his first entry into the House, and one of his earliest measures as Minister was to bring in a bill in 1785 which, while providing for the gradual extinction of all decayed boroughs, disfranchised thirty-six at once, and transferred their members to counties. He brought the King to abstain from opposition, and strove to buy off the borough-mongers, as the holders of rotten boroughs were called, by offering to compensate them for the seats they lost at their market-value. But the bulk of his own party joined the bulk of the Whigs in a steady resistance to the bill, while it received no effective support from the general opinion of the people without. The more glaring abuses, indeed, within Parliament itself, the abuses which stirred

CHAP. III. Chatham and Wilkes to action, had in great part disappeared. The bribery of members had ceased. Burke's Bill of Economical Reform had just dealt a fatal blow at the influence which the King exercised by suppressing a host of useless offices, household appointments, judicial and diplomatic charges, which were maintained for the purposes of corruption. But what was probably the most fatal obstacle to any pressure for reform was the triumph of public opinion to which Pitt owed his power. The utter overthrow of the Coalition, the complete victory of public opinion, had done much to diminish the sense of any real danger from the opposition which Parliament had shown till now to the voice of the nation. England, then as now, was indifferent to all but practical grievances; and the nation cared little for anomalies in the form of representation so long as it felt itself represented. "Terribly disappointed and beat," as Wilberforce tells us Pitt was by the rejection of his measure, the temper of the House and of the people was too plain to be mistaken, and though his opinion remained unaltered, he never brought it forward again.

*Pitt's
finance.*

The failure of his constitutional reform was more than compensated by the triumphs of his finance. When he entered office public credit was at its lowest ebb. The debt had been doubled by the American war, yet large sums still remained unfunded, while the revenue was reduced by a vast system of smuggling which turned every coast-town into a nest of robbers. The deficiency in the revenue was met for the moment by new taxes, but the time which was thus gained served to change the whole face of public affairs. The first of Pitt's financial measures—his plan for gradually paying off the debt by a sinking fund—was undoubtedly an error; but it had a happy effect in restoring public confidence. He met the smuggler by a reduction of Custom-duties which made his trade unprofitable. He revived Walpole's plan of an Excise. Meanwhile the public expenses were reduced, and com-

mission after commission was appointed to introduce economy into every department of the public service. The rapid developement of the national industry which we have already noted no doubt aided the success of these measures. Credit was restored. The smuggling trade was greatly reduced. In two years there was a surplus of a million, and though duty after duty was removed the revenue rose steadily with every remission of taxation. Meanwhile Pitt was showing the political value of the new finance in a wider field. Ireland, then as now, was England's difficulty. The tyrannous misgovernment under which she had groaned ever since the battle of the Boyne was producing its natural fruit; the miserable land was torn with political faction, religious feuds, and peasant conspiracies; and so threatening had the attitude of the Protestant party which ruled it become during the American war that they had forced the English Parliament to relinquish its control over their Parliament in Dublin. Pitt saw that much at least of the misery and disloyalty of Ireland sprang from its poverty. The population had grown rapidly, while culture remained stationary and commerce perished. And of this poverty much was the direct result of unjust law. Ireland was a grazing country, but to protect the interest of English graziers the import of its cattle into England was forbidden. To protect the interests of English clothiers and weavers, its manufactures were loaded with duties. To redress this wrong was the first financial effort of Pitt, and the bill which he introduced in 1785 did away with every obstacle to freedom of trade between England and Ireland. It was a measure which, as he held, would "draw what remained of the shattered empire together," and repair in part the loss of America by creating a loyal and prosperous Ireland; and struggling almost alone in face of a fierce opposition from the Whigs and the Manchester merchants, he dragged it through the English Parliament, though only to see it flung aside by the Protestant faction under Grattan

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CHAP. III. which then ruled the Parliament of Ireland. But the defeat only spurred him to a greater effort elsewhere. If Ireland was England's difficulty, France had been looked upon as England's natural enemy. We have seen how nobly Pitt rebuked prejudices such as this; but he knew that nothing could so effectively dispel it as increased intercourse between nation and nation. In 1787 therefore he concluded a Treaty of Commerce with France which enabled subjects of both countries to reside and travel in either without licence or passport, did away with all prohibition of trade on either side, and reduced every import duty.

*England
and
Europe.*

The immediate result of this treaty was a great increase of trade between France and England; and brief as its course was fated to be, it at once set Pitt on a higher level than any rival statesman of his time. But the spirit of humanity which breathed through his policy had to wrestle with difficulties both at home and abroad. No measure secured a warmer support from the young Minister than the bill for the suppression of the slave trade; but in 1788 it was defeated by the vigorous opposition of the trading classes and the prejudice of the people at large. His efforts to sap the enmity of nation against nation by a freer intercourse encountered a foe even more fatal than English prejudice, in the very movement of which his measures formed a part. Across the Channel this movement was growing into a revolution which was to change the face of the world. That such a revolution must one day come, every observer who had compared the state of Europe with that of England had long seen to be inevitable. So far as England was concerned, the Puritan resistance of the seventeenth century had in the end succeeded in checking the general tendency of the time to religious and political despotism. Since the Revolution of 1688 freedom of conscience and the people's right to govern itself through its representatives in Parliament had been practically established. Social equality had begun long before. Every

man from the highest to the lowest was subject to, and protected by, the same law. The English aristocracy, though exercising a powerful influence on government, were possessed of few social privileges, and hindered from forming a separate class in the nation by the legal and social tradition which counted all save the eldest son of a noble house as commoners. No impassable line parted the gentry from the commercial classes, and these again possessed no privileges which could part them from the lower classes of the community. Public opinion, the general sense of educated Englishmen, had established itself after a short struggle, as the dominant element in English government. But in all the other great states of Europe the wars of religion had left only the name of freedom. Government tended to a pure despotism. Privilege was supreme in religion, in politics, in society. Society itself rested on a rigid division of classes from one another, which refused to the people at large any equal rights of justice or of industry.

We have already seen how alien such a conception of national life was from the ideas which the wide diffusion of intelligence during the eighteenth century was spreading throughout Europe; and in almost every country some enlightened rulers were striving by administrative reforms to satisfy in some sort the sense of wrong which was felt around them. The attempts of sovereigns like Frederick the Great in Prussia and Joseph the Second in Austria and the Netherlands were rivalled by the efforts of statesmen such as Turgot in France. It was in France indeed that the contrast between the actual state of society and the new ideas of public right was felt most keenly. Nowhere had the victory of the Crown been more complete. The aristocracy had been robbed of all share in public affairs; it enjoyed social privileges and exemption from any contribution to the public burdens without that sense of public duty which a governing class to some degree always possesses. Guilds and monopolies fettered the

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CHAP. III. industry of the trader and the merchant, and cut them off from the working classes, as the value attached to noble blood cut off both from the aristocracy. If its political position indeed were compared with that of most of the countries round it, France stood high. Its government was less oppressive and more influenced by public opinion, its general wealth was larger and more evenly diffused, there was a better administration of justice, and greater security for public order. Poor as its peasantry seemed to English eyes, they were far above the peasants of Germany or Spain. Its middle class was the quickest and most intelligent in Europe. Under Lewis the Fifteenth opinion was practically free, though powerless to influence the government of the country; and a literary class had sprung up which devoted itself with wonderful brilliancy and activity to popularizing the ideas of social and political justice which it learned from English writers, and in the case of Montesquieu and Voltaire from personal contact with English life. The moral conceptions of the time, its love of mankind, its sense of human brotherhood, its hatred of oppression, its pity for the guilty and the poor, its longing after a higher and nobler standard of life and action, were expressed by a crowd of writers, and above all by Rousseau, with a fire and eloquence which carried them to the heart of the people. But this new force of intelligence only jostled roughly with the social forms with which it found itself in contact. The philosopher denounced the tyranny of the priesthood. The peasant grumbled at the lord's right to judge him in his courts and to exact feudal services from him. The merchant was galled by the trading restrictions and the heavy taxation. The country gentry rebelled against their exclusion from public life and from the government of the country. Its powerlessness to bring about any change at home turned all this new energy into sympathy with a struggle against tyranny abroad. Public opinion forced France to ally itself with America in its contest for liberty,

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and French volunteers under the Marquis de Lafayette joined Washington's army. But while the American war spread more widely throughout the nation the craving for freedom, it brought on the Government financial embarrassments from which it could only free itself by an appeal to the country at large. Lewis the Sixteenth resolved to summon the States-General, which had not met since the time of Richelieu, and to appeal to the nobles to waive their immunity from taxation. His resolve at once stirred into vigorous life every impulse and desire which had been seething in the minds of the people; and the States-General no sooner met at Versailles in May 1789 than the fabric of despotism and privilege began to crumble. A rising in Paris destroyed the Bastille, and the capture of this fortress was taken for the dawn of a new æra of constitutional freedom in France and through Europe. Even in England men thrilled with a strange joy at the tidings of its fall. "How much is this the greatest event that ever happened in the world," Fox cried with a burst of enthusiasm, "and how much the best!"

Pitt regarded the approach of France to sentiments of liberty which had long been familiar to England with greater coolness, but with no distrust. For the moment indeed his attention was distracted by an attack of madness which visited George the Third in 1788, and by the claim of a right to the Regency which was at once advanced by the Prince of Wales. The Prince belonged to the Whig party; and Fox, who was travelling in Italy, hurried home to support his claim in full belief that the Prince's Regency would be followed by his own return to power. Pitt successfully resisted the claim on the constitutional ground that in such a case the right to choose a temporary Regent, under what limitations it would, lay with Parliament; and a bill which conferred the Regency on the Prince, in accordance with this view, was already passing the Houses when the recovery of the King put an end to the long dispute. Foreign difficulties too, absorbed

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Pitt's attention. Russia had risen into greatness under Catharine the Second; and Catharine had resolved from the first on the annexation of Poland, the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the setting up of a Russian throne at Constantinople. In her first aim she was baffled for the moment by Frederick the Great. She had already made herself virtually mistress of the whole of Poland, her armies occupied the kingdom, and she had seated a nominee of her own on its throne, when Frederick in union with the Emperor Joseph the Second forced her to admit Germany to a share of the spoil. If the Polish partition of 1773 brought the Russian frontier westward to the upper waters of the Dwina and the Dnieper, it gave Galicia to Maria Theresa, and West Prussia to Frederick himself. Foiled in her first aim, she waited for the realization of her second till the alliance between the two German powers was at an end through the resistance of Prussia to Joseph's schemes for the annexation of Bavaria, and till the death of Frederick removed her most watchful foe. Then in 1788 Joseph and the Empress joined hands for a partition of the Turkish Empire. But Prussia was still watchful, and England was no longer fettered as in 1773 by troubles with America. The friendship established by Chatham between the two countries, which had been suspended by Bute's treachery and all but destroyed during the Northern League of Neutral Powers, had been restored by Pitt through his co-operation with the successor of Frederick the Great in the restoration of the Dutch Statholderate. Its political weight was now seen in an alliance of England, Prussia, and Holland, in 1789, for the preservation of the Turkish Empire. A great European struggle seemed at hand. In such a struggle the sympathy and aid of France was of the highest importance; and it was only as weakening her in face of such a crisis that Pitt looked on the Revolution with any fear. But with the treaty the danger passed away. In the spring of 1790 Joseph died broken-hearted at the failure of his plans

and the revolt of the Netherlands against his innovations; Austria practically withdrew from the war with the Turks; and the young Minister could give free expression to the sympathy with which the French movement inspired him.

In France indeed things were moving fast. By breaking down the division between its separate orders the States-General became a National Assembly, which abolished the privileges of the provincial parliaments, of the nobles, and the Church. In October 1789 the mob of Paris marched on Versailles and forced both King and Assembly to return with them to the capital; and a Constitution hastily put together was accepted by Lewis the Sixteenth in the stead of his old despotic power. To Pitt the tumult and disorder with which these great changes were wrought seemed transient matters. In January 1790 he still believed that "the present convulsions in France must sooner or later culminate in general harmony and regular order," and that when her own freedom was established, "France would stand forth as one of the most brilliant powers of Europe." But the coolness and goodwill with which Pitt looked on the Revolution was far from being universal in the nation at large. The cautious good sense of the bulk of Englishmen, their love of order and law, their distaste for violent changes and for abstract theories, as well as their reverence for the past, were rousing throughout the country a dislike of the revolutionary changes which were hurrying on across the Channel; and both the political sense and the political prejudice of the nation were being fired by the warnings of Edmund Burke. The fall of the Bastille, though it kindled enthusiasm in Fox, roused in Burke only distrust. "Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice," he wrote a few weeks later, "neither is safe." The night of the fourth of August, when the privileges of every class were abolished, filled him with horror. He saw, and rightly saw, in it the critical moment which

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CHAP. III. revealed the character of the Revolution, and his part was taken at once. "The French," he cried in January, while Pitt was foretelling a glorious future for the new Constitution, "the French have shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin who have hitherto existed in the world. In a short space of time they have pulled to the ground their army, their navy, their commerce, their arts and their manufactures."

Pitt and France.

But in Parliament Burke stood alone. The Whigs, though distrustfully, followed Fox in his applause of the Revolution. The Tories, yet more distrustfully, followed Pitt; and Pitt warmly expressed his sympathy with the constitutional government which was ruling France. At this moment indeed the more revolutionary party in that country gave a signal proof of its friendship for England. Irritated by an English settlement at Nootka Sound in California, Spain appealed to France for aid in accordance with the Family Compact; and the French Ministry, with a party at its back which believed things had gone far enough, resolved on a war as the best means of checking the progress of the Revolution and restoring the power of the Crown. The revolutionary party naturally opposed this design; and after a bitter struggle the right of declaring war, save with the sanction of the Assembly, was taken from the King. With this vote all danger of hostilities passed away. "The French Government," Pitt asserted, "was bent on cultivating the most unbounded friendship for Great Britain," and he saw no reason in its revolutionary changes why Britain should not return the friendship of France. What told even more on his temper towards that country was a conviction that nothing but the joint action of France and England would in the end arrest the troubles of Eastern Europe. His intervention foiled for the moment a fresh effort of Prussia to rob Poland of Dantzic and Thorn. But though Russia was still pressing Turkey hard, a Russian war was so unpopular in England that a hostile vote in Parliament forced Pitt to discontinue

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his armaments; and a fresh union of Austria and Prussia, which promised at this juncture to bring about a close of the Turkish struggle, promised also a fresh attack on the independence of Poland. To prevent a new partition without the co-operation of France was impossible; and in the existing state of things Pitt saw nothing to hinder the continuance of a friendship which would make such a co-operation inevitable.

But while Pitt was pleading for friendship between the two countries, Burke was resolved to make friendship impossible. In Parliament, as we have seen, he stood alone. He had long ceased, in fact, to have any hold over the House of Commons. The eloquence which had vied with that of Chatham during the discussions on the Stamp Act had become distasteful to the bulk of its members. The length of his speeches, the profound and philosophical character of his argument, the splendour and often the extravagance of his illustrations, his passionate earnestness, his want of temper and discretion, wearied and perplexed the squires and merchants about him. He was known now-a-days as "the dinner-bell of the House," so rapidly did its benches thin at his rising. For a time his energies found scope in the impeachment of Hastings; and the grandeur of his appeals to the justice of England hushed detraction. But with the close of the impeachment his reputation had again fallen; and the approach of old age, for he was now past sixty, seemed to counsel retirement from an assembly where he stood unpopular and alone. But age and disappointment and loneliness were forgotten as Burke saw rising across the Channel the embodiment of all that he hated—a Revolution founded on scorn of the past, and threatening with ruin the whole social fabric which the past had reared; the ordered structure of classes and ranks crumbling before a doctrine of social equality; a State rudely demolished and reconstituted; a Church and a Nobility swept away in a night. Against the enthusiasm of what he rightly saw to be a new political religion he

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CHAP. III. resolved to rouse the enthusiasm of the old. He was at once a great orator and a great writer; and now that the House was deaf to his voice, he appealed to the country by his pen. The "Reflections on the French Revolution" which he published in October, 1790, not only denounced the acts of rashness and violence which sullied the great change that France had wrought, but the very principles from which the change had sprung. Burke's deep sense of the need of social order, of the value of that continuity in human affairs "without which men would become like flies in a summer," blinded him to all but the faith in mere rebellion and the yet sillier faith in mere novelty which disguised a real nobleness of aim and temper even in the most ardent of the revolutionists. He would see no abuses in the past, now that it had fallen, or anything but the ruin of society in the future. He preached a crusade against men whom he regarded as the foes of religion and civilization, and called on the armies of Europe to put down a Revolution whose principles threatened every state with destruction.

*His
failure in
Parliament.*

The great obstacle to such a crusade was Pitt: and one of the grandest outbursts of the "Reflections" closed with a bitter taunt at the Minister. "The age of chivalry," Burke cried, "is gone; that of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever." But neither taunt nor invective moved Pitt from his course. At the moment when the "Reflections" appeared he gave a fresh assurance to France of his resolve to have nothing to do with any crusade against the Revolution. "This country," he wrote, "means to persevere in the neutrality hitherto scrupulously observed with respect to the internal dissensions of France; and from which it will never depart unless the conduct held there makes it indispensable as an act of self-defence." So far indeed was he from sharing the reactionary panic which was spreading around him that he chose this time for supporting Fox in his Libel Act, a measure which, by

transferring the decision on what was libellous in any publication from the judge to the jury, completed the freedom of the press; and himself passed in 1791 a bill which, though little noticed among the storms of the time, was one of the noblest of his achievements. He boldly put aside the dread which had been roused by the American war, that the gift of self-government to our colonies would serve only as a step towards their secession from the mother-country, and established a House of Assembly and a Council in the two Canadas. "I am convinced," said Fox, who gave the measure his hearty support, "that the only method of retaining distant colonies with advantage is to enable them to govern themselves!" and the policy of the one statesman as well as the foresight of the other have been justified by the later history of our dependencies. Nor had Burke better success with his own party. Fox remained an ardent lover of the Revolution, and answered a fresh attack of Burke upon it with more than usual warmth. Till now a close affection had bound the two men together; but no sooner had this defence been uttered than the fanaticism of Burke declared their union to be over. "There is no loss of friendship," Fox exclaimed, with a sudden burst of tears. "There is!" Burke repeated. "I know the price of my conduct. Our friendship is at an end."

Within the walls of Parliament however Burke as yet stood utterly alone. His "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," in June 1791, failed to detach a follower from Fox; while Pitt coldly counselled him rather to praise the English Constitution than to rail at the French. "I have made many enemies and few friends," Burke wrote sadly to the French princes who had fled from their country and were gathering in arms at Coblenz, "by the part I have taken." But the opinion of the people was slowly drifting to his side; and a sale of thirty thousand copies showed that the "Reflections" echoed the general sentiment of Englishmen. At this moment indeed the mood

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of England was singularly unfavourable to any fair appreciation of the Revolution across the Channel. Her temper was above all industrial. Men who were working hard and fast growing rich, who had the narrow and practical turn of men of business, looked angrily at this sudden disturbance of order, this restless and vague activity, these rhetorical appeals to human feeling, these abstract and often empty theories. In England it was a time of political content and social well-being, of steady economic progress, as well as of a powerful religious revival; and an insular lack of imaginative interest in other races hindered men from seeing that every element of this content, of this order, of this peaceful and harmonious progress, of this reconciliation of society and religion, was wanting abroad. The sympathy which the first outbreak of the Revolution had roused among Englishmen grew cooler in fact with every step which the Revolution took. While the Declaration of the Rights of Man roused France to a frenzy of enthusiasm, it was set aside as a dream by the practical islanders who based their rights on precedent and not on theory. The abolition of all social privileges on the 12th of August, the most characteristic step in the French Revolution, was met with grave disapproval by a people more alien from social equality than any people in Europe. Every incident in the struggle between the French people and their King widened the breach of feeling. The anarchy of the country, the want of political sense in its Assembly, the paltry declamation of its clubs, the exaggerated sentiment, the universal suspicion, the suspension of every security for personal freedom, the arrests, the murders, the overthrow of the Church, the ruin of the Crown, were watched with an ever-growing severity by a nation whose chief instinct was one of order, whose bent was to practical politics, whose temper was sober and trustful, whose passionate love of personal liberty was only equalled by its passionate abhorrence of bloodshed in civil strife, and whose ecclesiastical and political

institutions were newly endeared to it by a fresh revival of religious feeling, and by the constitutional attitude of its Government for a hundred years.

Sympathy in fact was soon limited to a few groups of reformers who gathered in "Constitutional Clubs," and whose reckless language quickened the national reaction. But in spite of Burke's appeals and the cries of the nobles who had fled from France and longed only to march against their country, Europe held back from any attack on the Revolution, and Pitt preserved his attitude of neutrality, though with a greater appearance of reserve. So anxious, in fact, did the aspect of affairs in the East make him for the restoration of tranquillity in France, that he foiled a plan which its emigrant nobles had formed for a descent on the French coast, and declared formally at Vienna that England would remain absolutely neutral should hostilities arise between France and the Emperor. But the Emperor was as anxious to avoid a French war as Pitt himself. Though Catharine, now her strife with Turkey was over, wished to plunge the two German powers into a struggle with the Revolution which would leave her free to annex Poland single-handed, neither Leopold nor Prussia would tie their hands by such a contest. The flight of Lewis the Sixteenth from Paris in June 1791 brought Europe for a moment to the verge of war; but he was intercepted and brought back: and for a while the danger seemed to incline the revolutionists in France to greater moderation. Lewis too not only accepted the Constitution, but pleaded earnestly with the Emperor against any armed intervention as certain to bring ruin to his throne. In their conference at Pillnitz therefore, in August, Leopold and the King of Prussia contented themselves with a vague declaration inviting the European powers to co-operate in restoring a sound form of government in France, availed themselves of England's neutrality to refuse all military aid to the French princes, and dealt simply with the affairs of Poland. But the peace they desired soon became impossible.

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CHAP. III. The Constitutional Royalists in France availed themselves of the irritation caused by the Declaration of Pillnitz to revive the cry for a war which, as they hoped, would give strength to the throne. The more violent revolutionists, or Jacobins, on the other hand, abandoned their advocacy of peace. Under the influence of the "Girondists," the deputies from the south of France, whose aim was a republic, and who saw in a great national struggle a means of overthrowing the monarchy, they decided, in spite of the opposition of their leader, Robespierre, on a contest with the Emperor. Both parties united to demand the breaking up of an army which the emigrant princes had formed on the Rhine; and though Leopold before his death assented to this demand, France declared war against his successor, Francis, in April, 1792.

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CHAPTER IV.

ENGLAND AND REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE.

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THAT the war with Germany would widen into a vast European struggle, a struggle in which the peoples would rise against their oppressors, and the freedom which France had won diffuse itself over the world, no French revolutionist doubted for an hour. Nor did they doubt that in this struggle England would join them. It was from England that they had drawn those principles of political and social liberty which they believed themselves to be putting into practice. It was to England that they looked above all for approbation and sympathy, and on the aid of England that they confidently counted in their struggle with a despotic and priest-ridden Europe. Absorbed in the mighty events about them, and utterly ignorant of the real set of English feeling or the real meaning of Pitt's policy, they were astonished and indignant at his firm refusal of their alliance and his resolve to stand apart from the struggle. It was in vain that Pitt strove to allay this irritation by demanding only that Holland should remain untouched, and promising neutrality even though Belgium should be occupied by a French army, or that he strengthened these pledges by a reduction of military forces, and by bringing forward in 1792 a peace-budget which rested on a large remission of taxation. To the revolutionists at Paris the attitude of

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CHAP. IV. England remained unintelligible and irritating. Instead of the aid they had counted on, they found but a cold neutrality. In place of the sympathy on which they reckoned they saw, now that they looked coolly across the Channel, a reserve passing into disapproval. The pen of Burke was denouncing the Revolution as the very negation of those principles on which English liberty rested. The priests and nobles who had fled from the new France were finding pity and welcome on English shores. And now that France flung herself on an armed Europe to win freedom for its peoples from their kings, England stood coldly apart. To men frenzied with a passionate enthusiasm, and frenzied yet more with a sudden terror at the dangers they were encountering, such an attitude of neutrality in such a quarter seemed like a stab in the back.

Their efforts in England.

But that this attitude was that of the English people as a whole was incredible to the French enthusiasts. Conscientious as no Englishman could be conscious of the great evils they had overthrown, of the great benefits they had won for their country, they saw in the attitude of England only the sympathy of an aristocracy with the aristocracy they had struck down. The cries for a parliamentary reform which reached them across the Channel became in their ears cries of a people as powerless and oppressed as the people of France had been. They still clung to the hope of England's aid in the emancipation of Europe from despotism and superstition, but they came now to believe that England must itself be emancipated before such an aid could be given. Their first work therefore they held to be the bringing about a revolution in England which might free the people from the aristocracy and the aristocratic government which held it down. But this was far from being all the work they looked to accomplishing. The aristocracy which oppressed the people at home oppressed, as they believed, great peoples beyond the bounds of England itself. It was subjecting to its sway nation after

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nation in India. Its rule over Ireland was a masterpiece of tyranny. To rouse India, to rouse Ireland to a struggle which should shake off the English yoke, became necessary steps to the establishment of freedom in England itself. From the moment therefore that the opposition between the two countries declared itself, French agents were busy "sowing the revolution" in each quarter. In Ireland they entered into communication with the United Irishmen. In India they appeared at the courts of the native princes, and above all at the court of Mysore. Meanwhile in England itself they strove through a number of associations, which had formed themselves under the name of Constitutional Clubs, to rouse the same spirit which they had roused in France; and the French envoy, Chauvelin, protested warmly against a proclamation which denounced this correspondence as seditious.

Such a course could only knit men of all parties together in a common resentment; and the effect of these revolutionary efforts on the friends of the Revolution was seen in a declaration which they wrested from Fox, that at such a moment even the discussion of parliamentary reform was inexpedient. A far worse result was the new strength they gave to its foes. Burke was still working hard in writings whose extravagance of style was forgotten in their intensity of feeling to spread alarm throughout Europe. He had from the first encouraged the emigrant princes to take arms, and sent his son to join them at Coblenz. "Be alarmists," he wrote to them; "diffuse terror!" But the royalist terror which he sowed would have been of little moment had it not roused a revolutionary terror in France itself. At the threat of war against the Emperor the two German Courts had drawn together, and reluctantly abandoning all hope of peace with France, gathered eighty thousand men under the Duke of Brunswick, and advanced slowly in August, 1792, on the Meuse. France, though she had forced on the struggle, was really almost defenceless; her forces in Belgium broke at the first shock of arms into

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shameful rout; and the panic, as it spread from the soldiery to the nation at large, took violent and horrible forms. At the first news of Brunswick's advance the mob of Paris broke into the Tuileries on the 10th of August; and at its demand Lewis, who had taken refuge in the Assembly, was suspended from his office and imprisoned in the Temple. In the following September, while General Dumouriez by boldness and adroit negotiations was arresting the progress of the Allies in the defiles of the Argonne, bodies of paid murderers butchered the royalist prisoners who crowded the gaols of Paris, with a view of influencing the elections to a new Convention which met to proclaim the abolition of royalty. The retreat of the Prussian army, whose numbers had been reduced by disease till an advance on Paris became impossible, and a brilliant victory won by Dumouriez at Jemappes which laid the Netherlands at his feet, turned the panic of the French into a wild self-confidence. In November the Convention decreed that France offered the aid of her soldiers to all nations who would strive for freedom. "All governments are our enemies," cried its President; "all peoples are our allies." In the teeth of treaties signed only two years before, and of the stipulation made by England when it pledged itself to neutrality, the French Government resolved to attack Holland, and ordered its generals to enforce by arms the opening of the Scheldt.

France
declares
war with
England.

To do this was to force England into war. Public opinion was already pressing every day harder upon Pitt. The horror of the massacres of September, the hideous despotism of the Parisian mob, did more to estrange England from the Revolution than all the eloquence of Burke. But even while withdrawing our Minister from Paris on the imprisonment of the King, to whose Court he had been commissioned, Pitt clung stubbornly to a policy of peace. His hope was to bring the war to an end through English mediation, and to "leave France, which I believe is the best way, to arrange its own internal affairs as it can."

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No hour of Pitt's life is so great as the hour when he stood lonely and passionless before the growth of national passion, and refused to bow to the gathering cry for war. Even the news of the September massacres could only force from him a hope that France might abstain from any war of conquest and might escape from its social anarchy. In October the French agent in England reported that Pitt was about to recognize the Republic. At the opening of November he still pressed on Holland a steady neutrality. It was France, and not England, which at last wrenched peace from his grasp. The decree of the Convention and the attack on the Dutch left him no choice but war, for it was impossible for England to endure a French fleet at Antwerp, or to desert allies like the United Provinces. But even in December the news of the approaching partition of Poland nerved him to a last struggle for peace; he offered to aid Austria in acquiring Bavaria if she would make terms with France, and pledged himself to France to abstain from war if that power would cease from violating the independence of her neighbour states. But desperately as Pitt struggled for peace, his struggle was in vain. Across the Channel his moderation was only taken for fear, while in England the general mourning which followed on the news of the French King's execution showed the growing ardour for the contest. The rejection of his last offers indeed made a contest inevitable. Both sides ceased from diplomatic communications, and in February 1793 France issued her Declaration of War.

From that moment Pitt's power was at an end. His pride, his immoveable firmness, and the general confidence of the nation, still kept him at the head of affairs; but he could do little save drift along with a tide of popular feeling which he never fully understood. Around him the country broke out in a fit of passion and panic which rivalled the passion and panic over-sea. The confidence of France in its illusions as to opinion in England deluded for the moment even

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Englishmen themselves. The partisans of Republicanism were in reality but a few handfuls of men who played at gathering Conventions, and at calling themselves citizens and patriots, in childish imitation of what was going on across the Channel. But in the mass of Englishmen the dread of these revolutionists passed for the hour into sheer panic. Even the bulk of the Whig party believed property and the constitution to be in peril, and forsook Fox when he still proclaimed his faith in France and the Revolution. The "Old Whigs," as they called themselves, with the Duke of Portland, Earls Spenser and Fitzwilliam, and Mr. Wyndham at their head, followed Burke in giving their adhesion to the Government. Pitt himself, though little touched by the political reaction which was to constitute the creed of those who represented themselves as "Pittites," was shaken by the dream of social danger which was turning the wisest heads about him. For a moment at least his cool good sense bent to believe in the existence of "thousands of bandits" who were ready to rise against the throne, to plunder every landlord, and to sack London. "Paine is no fool," he said to his niece, who quoted to him a passage from the *Rights of Man*, in which that author had vindicated the principles of the Revolution. "He is perhaps right; but if I did what he wants I should have thousands of bandits on my hands to-morrow and London burnt." It was this sense of social danger which alone reconciled him to the war. It would have been impossible indeed for Pitt, or for any other English statesman, to have stood idly by while France annexed the Netherlands and marched to annex Holland. He must in any case have fought even had France not forced him to fight by her declaration of war. But bitter as the need of such a struggle was to him, he accepted it with the less reluctance that war, as he trusted, would check the progress of "French principles" in England itself.

The worst issue of this panic was the series of legislative

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measures in which it found expression. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, a bill against seditious assemblies restricted the liberty of public meeting, and a wider scope was given to the Statute of Treasons. Prosecution after prosecution was directed against the Press; the sermons of some dissenting ministers were indicted as seditious; and the conventions of sympathizers with France were roughly broken up. The worst excesses of this panic were witnessed in Scotland, where young Whigs, whose only offence was an advocacy of parliamentary reform, were sentenced to transportation, and where a brutal Judge openly expressed his regret that the practice of torture in seditious cases should have fallen into disuse. But the panic soon passed away for sheer want of material to feed on. The bloodshed and anarchy of the Jacobin rule disgusted the last sympathizers with France. To stanch Whigs like Romilly the French, after the massacres of October, seemed a mere "nation of tigers." The good sense of the nation discovered the unreality of the dangers which had driven it to its short-lived frenzy; and when the leaders of the Corresponding Society, a body which expressed sympathy with France, were brought to trial in 1794 on a charge of high treason, their acquittal told that all active terror was over. So far indeed was the nation from any danger of social overthrow that, save for occasional riots to which the poor were goaded by sheer want of bread, no social disturbance troubled England during the twenty years of struggle which lay before it. But though the public terror passed, it left a terrible legacy behind. The blind reaction against all reform which had sprung from the panic lasted on when the panic was forgotten. For nearly a quarter of a century it was hard to get a hearing for any measure which threatened change to an existing institution, beneficial though the change might be. Even the philanthropic movement which so nobly characterized the time found itself checked and hampered by the dread of revolution.

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Easy however as Pitt found it to deal with "French principles" at home, he found it less easy to deal with French armies abroad. The very excellences of his character indeed unfitted him for the conduct of a war. He was at heart a Peace Minister; he was forced into war by a panic and enthusiasm which he shared in a very small degree; and he was utterly destitute of his father's gift of entering instinctively into the sympathies and passions around him, and of rousing passions and sympathies in return. At first indeed all seemed to go ill for France. When the campaign of 1793 opened she was girt in along her whole frontier by a ring of foes. The forces of the House of Austria, of the Empire, and of the King of Prussia, pressed her to the north and the east; those of Spain and Sardinia attacked her in the south; and the accession of England to this league threatened to close the sea against her. The efforts of these foreign foes were seconded too by civil war. The peasants of Poitou and Brittany, estranged from the revolution by its attack on the clergy, rose in revolt against the government at Paris; while Marseilles and Lyons were driven into insurrection by the violent leaders who now seized on power in the capital. The campaign opened therefore with a series of terrible reverses. In spite of the efforts of General Dumouriez the French were foiled in their attack on Holland and driven, after a disastrous defeat at Neerwinden, from the Netherlands. At the moment when the Duke of York with ten thousand English troops joined the Austrian army on the northern border of France, a march upon Paris would have crushed the revolution. But the chance was lost. At this moment indeed the two German powers were far from wishing honestly for the suppression of the Republic and the re-establishment of a strong monarchy in France. Such a restoration would have foiled their projects of aggrandisement in Eastern Europe. The strife on the Rhine had set Russia free, as Pitt had foreseen, to carry out her schemes of aggression;

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and Austria and Prussia saw themselves forced, in the interest of a balance of power, to share in her annexations at the cost of Poland. But this new division of Poland would have become impossible had France been enabled by a restoration of its monarchy to take up again its natural position in Europe, and to accept the alliance which Pitt would in such a case have offered her. The policy of the German courts therefore was to prolong an anarchy which left them free for the moment to crush Poland, and which they counted on crushing in its turn at a more convenient time; and the allied armies which might have marched upon Paris were purposely frittered away in sieges in the Netherlands and the Rhine.

Such a policy gave France all that she needed to recover from the shock of her past disasters: it gave her time. Whatever were the crimes and tyranny of her leaders, the country felt in spite of them the value of the Revolution, and rallied enthusiastically to its support. The strength of the revolt in La Vendée was broken. The insurrection in the south was drowned in blood. The Spanish invaders were held at bay at the foot of the Pyrenees, and the Piedmontese were driven from Nice and Savoy. At the close of the year a fresh blow fell upon the struggling country in the revolt of Toulon, the naval station of its Mediterranean fleet. The town called for foreign aid against the government at Paris; and Lord Hood entered the port with an English squadron, while a force of 11,000 men, gathered hastily from every quarter, was despatched under General O'Hara as a garrison. But the successes against Spain and Savoy freed the hands of France at this critical moment: the town was at once invested, and the seizure of a promontory which commanded the harbour, a step counselled by a young artillery officer, Napoleon Buonaparte, brought about the withdrawal of the garrison and the surrender of Toulon. The success was a prelude of what was to come. At the opening of 1794 a victory at Fleurus, which again made the French masters of the Netherlands,

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CHAP. IV. showed that the tide had turned. France was united within by the cessation of the Terror and of the tyranny of the Jacobins, while on every border victory followed the gigantic efforts with which she met the coalition against her. The coalition indeed was fast breaking up. Spain sued for peace. Prussia, more intent on her gains in the east than on any battle with the revolution on the west, prepared to follow Spain's example by the withdrawal of her armies from the Rhine. It was only by English subsidies that Austria and Sardinia were still kept in the field; and the Rhine provinces were wrested from the first, while the forces of Sardinia were driven back from the Riviera and the maritime Alps into the plain of Piedmont. Before the year ended Holland was lost. Pichegru crossed the Waal in mid-winter with an overwhelming force, and the wretched remnant of ten thousand men who had followed the Duke of York to the Netherlands, thinned by disease and by the hardships of retreat, re-embarked for England.

*Howe's
victory.*

In one quarter only had the fortune of war gone against the French republic. The victories of Rodney at the close of the strife with America had concentrated English interest on the fleet. Even during the peace, while the army was sacrificed to financial distress, great efforts were made to preserve the efficiency of the navy; and the recent alarms of war with Russia and Spain had ended in raising it to a strength which it had never reached before. But France was as eager as England herself to dispute the sovereignty of the seas, and almost equal attention had been bestowed on the navy which crowded the great harbours of Toulon and Brest. In force as in number of ships it was equal in effective strength to that of England; and both nations looked with hope to the issue of a contest at sea. No battle marked the first year of the war; but, as it ended, the revolt of Toulon gave a fatal wound to the naval strength of France in the almost total destruction of her Mediterranean fleet. That of the Channel however remained

unhurt; and it was this which Lord Howe at last encountered off Brest in 1794, in the battle which is known by the name of the day on which it was fought—The “First of June.” The number of ships on either side was nearly the same, and the battle was one of sheer hard fighting, unmarked by any display of naval skill. But the result was a decisive victory for England, and the French admiral, weakened by a loss of seven vessels and three thousand men, again took refuge in Brest.

The success of Lord Howe did somewhat to counteract the discouragement which sprang from the general aspect of the war. At the opening of 1795 the coalition finally gave way. Holland had been detached from it by Pichegru's conquest, and the Batavian republic which he set up there was now an ally of France. In the spring Prussia bought peace at Basle by the cession of her possessions west of the Rhine. Peace with Spain followed in the summer, while Sweden and the Protestant cantons of Switzerland recognised the republic. These terrible blows were hardly met by the success of the Austrian army in relieving Mainz, or by the colonial acquisitions of England. The latter indeed were far from being inconsiderable. Most of the West-Indian Islands which had been held by France now fell into British hands; and the alliance of Holland with the French threw open to English attack the far more valuable settlements of the Dutch. The surrender of Cape Town in September gave England the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, the nucleus of what has since grown into a vast southern settlement which is destined to play a great part in the history of Africa. At the close of the year the Island of Ceylon was added to our Indian dependencies. Both of these acquisitions were destined to remain permanently attached to England, though at the moment their value was eclipsed by the conquest of the Dutch colonies in the Pacific, the more famous Spice Islands of the Malaccas and Java. But, important as these gains were in their after issues, they had no

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immediate influence on the war. The French armies prepared for the invasion of Italy; while in France itself discord came well-nigh to an end. A descent by a force of French emigrants on the coast of Brittany ended in their massacre at Quiberon and in the final cessation of the war in La Vendée; while the royalist party in Paris was crushed as soon as it rose against the Convention by the genius of Napoleon Buonaparte.

But the fresh severities against the ultra-republicans which followed on the establishment of a Directory after this success indicated the moderate character of the new government, and Pitt seized on this change in the temper of the French government as giving an opening for peace. The dread of a Jacobin propagandism was now all but at an end. In spite of an outbreak of the London mob, whose cries meant chiefly impatience of dear bread, but which brought about a fresh suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act and the introduction of a Bill "for the prosecution of seditious meetings," the fear of any social disturbance or of the spread of "French principles" in England was fast passing away from men's minds. The new constitution which France accepted in 1795 showed that the tendencies of the French themselves were now rather to order than to freedom. The old grounds for the struggle therefore had ceased to exist; while the pressure of it grew hourly more intolerable. Pitt himself was sick of the strife. The war indeed had hardly begun when he found himself without the means of carrying it on. The English navy was in a high state of efficiency; but the financial distress which followed the American war had brought with it a neglect of the army. The army was not only small, but without proper equipment; and the want of military experience among its soldiers was only equalled by the incapacity of their leaders. "We have no general," Lord Grenville wrote bitterly, "but some old woman in a red riband." Wretched, too, as had been the conduct of the war, its cost was already terrible;

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for if England was without soldiers she had wealth, and in default of nobler means of combating the revolution Pitt had been forced to use wealth as an engine of war. He became the paymaster of the coalition, and his subsidies kept the allied armies in the field. But the immense loans which these called for, and the quick growth of expenditure, undid all the financial reforms on which the young minister prided himself. Taxation, which had reached its lowest point at the outbreak of the contest, mounted ere a few years were past to a height undreamed of before. The debt rose by leaps and bounds. In three years nearly eighty millions had been added to it, a sum greater than that piled up by the whole war with America, and in the opening of 1796 votes were taken for loans which amounted to twenty-five millions more.

Nor was this wreck of his financial hopes Pitt's only ground for desiring a close of the war. From the first, as we have seen, he had been keenly sensitive to the European dangers which the contest involved; nor had he shown, even in his moment of social panic, the fanatical blindness of men like Burke to the evils which had produced the revolution, or to the good which it had wrought. But he could only listen in silence while the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Lord Shelburne of earlier days and the successor of Chatham as the advocate of a more liberal policy, met the rhetoric of Burke by cool demonstration of the benefit which the recent change had brought to the mass of the French people, and by pointing to the profit which Russia was drawing from the struggle in the west. In their wide-reaching view of European affairs, in their justice to the revolution, Shelburne and Pitt stood alone. Around them men were hardened and blinded by passion. The old hatred between nation and nation, which Pitt had branded as irrational, woke up fiercer than ever at the clash of arms, for with it was blended a resentment that had smouldered in English breasts ever since the war with America at the blow which France had dealt England in

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that hour of her weakness, and a disgust which only slowly grew fainter at her overthrow of every social and political institution that Englishmen held dear. On the dogged temper of the nation at large the failure of the coalition produced little effect. It had no fear of fighting France single-handed, nor could it understand Pitt's suggestion that a time had come for opening negotiations with a view to peace. Public opinion indeed went hotly with Burke in his denunciation of all purpose of relaxing England's hostility against the revolution, a denunciation which was embodied in his "Letters on a Regicide Peace," the last outcry of that fanaticism which had done so much to plunge the world in blood.

But though Pitt stood all but alone, he was firm in his purpose to bring the war, if he could, to a close. What specially moved him was not the danger on the Continent, whether that danger sprang from French victories or from aggression in the east. It was a danger in the west. Vain as the expectations of the French revolutionists had proved in the case of England, they had better ground for their hopes elsewhere. Even before the outbreak of the war Pitt had shown how keen was his sense of a possible danger from Ireland. In that wretched country the terrible fruits of a century of oppression and wrong were still to reap. From the close of the American war, when her armed Volunteers had wrung legislative independence from the Rockingham ministry, Ireland had continued to be England's difficulty. She was now "independent;" but her independence was a mere name for the uncontrolled rule of a few noble families. The victory of the Volunteers had been won simply to the profit of "undertakers," who returned a majority of members in the Irish House of Commons, while they themselves formed the Irish House of Lords. The suspension of any effective control or interference from England left Ireland at these men's mercy, and they soon showed that they meant to keep it for themselves. When the Catholics claimed admission

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to the franchise or to equal civil rights as a reward for their aid in the late struggle, their claim was rejected. A similar demand of the Presbyterians, who had formed a good half of the Volunteers, for the removal of their disabilities was equally set aside. Even Grattan, when he pleaded for a reform which would make the Parliament at least a fair representative of the Protestant Englishry, utterly failed. The ruling class found government too profitable to share it with other possessors. It was only by hard bribery that the English viceroys could secure their co-operation in the simplest measures of administration. "If ever there was a country unfit to govern itself," said Lord Hutchinson, "it is Ireland. A corrupt aristocracy, a ferocious commonalty, a distracted Government, a divided people!"

The real character of this Parliamentary rule was seen in the rejection of Pitt's offer of free trade. In Pitt's eyes the danger of Ireland lay above all in the misery of its people. Although the Irish Catholics were held down by the brute force of their Protestant rulers, he saw that their discontent was growing fast into rebellion, and that one secret at any rate of their discontent lay in Irish poverty, a poverty increased if not originally brought about by the jealous exclusion of Irish products from their natural markets in England itself. One of his first commercial measures therefore, as we have seen, aimed at putting an end to this exclusion by a bill which established freedom of trade between the two islands. But though he met successfully the fears and jealousies of the English farmers and manufacturers he was foiled by the factious ignorance of the Irish landowners, and his bill was rejected by the Irish Parliament. So utterly was he discouraged that for the moment he ceased from all further attempts to improve the condition of Ireland. But the efforts which the French revolutionists made to excite rebellion amongst the Irish roused him to fresh measures of conciliation and good government. The hopes of some reform of the

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Irish Parliament had been fanned by the eloquence of Grattan and by the pressure of the United Irishmen, an association which had sprung up in Ulster, where Protestant dissenters, who were equally excluded with Catholics from any share in political power, formed the strongest part of the population. These hopes however were growing every day fainter. To the Irish aristocracy parliamentary reform meant the close of a corrupt rule which had gone on unchecked since the American war. But to the Irish Catholic it meant far more; it meant his admission, not only to the electoral franchise, but in the end to all the common privileges of citizenship from which he was excluded, his "emancipation," to use the word which now became common, from the yoke of slavery which had pressed on him ever since the Battle of the Boyne.

To such an emancipation Pitt was already looking forward. In 1792, a year before the outbreak of war with France, he forced on the Irish Parliament measures for the admission of Catholics to the electoral franchise and to civil and military office within the island, which promised a new era of religious liberty. But the promise came too late. The hope of conciliation was lost in the fast rising tide of religious and social passion. As the dream of obtaining Parliamentary reform died away the United Irishmen of the North drifted into projects of insurrection and a correspondence with France. The news of the French Revolution fell with a yet more terrible effect on the Catholic peasantry, brooding over their misery and their wrongs. Their discontent broke out in social disorder, in the outrages of secret societies of "Defenders" and "Peep o' Day Boys," which spread panic among the ruling classes. It was only by sheer terror and bloodshed that the Protestant landowners, who banded together in "Orange" societies to meet the secret societies about them, could hold the country down. Outrages on the one side, tyranny on the other, deepened the disorder and panic every day, and the hopes of the reformers grew fainter as

the terror rose fast around them. The maddened Protestants scouted all notions of further concessions to men whom they looked upon as on the verge of revolt; and Grattan's motions for reform were defeated by increasing majorities. On the other hand the entry of the anti-revolutionary Whigs into Pitt's ministry revived Grattan's hopes, for Burke and his followers were pledged to a liberal policy towards Ireland, and Lord Fitzwilliam, who came over as Viceroy in 1794, encouraged Grattan to bring in a bill for the entire emancipation of the Catholics at the opening of the next year. Such a step can hardly have been taken without Pitt's assent; but the minister was now swept along by a tide of feeling which he could not control. The Orangemen threatened revolt, the Tories in Pitt's own cabinet recoiled from the notion of reform, and Lord Fitzwilliam was not only recalled, but replaced by Lord Camden, an avowed enemy of all change or concession to the Catholics. From that moment the United Irishmen became a revolutionary society; and one of their leaders, Wolfe Tone, made his way to France in the spring of 1796 to seek aid in a national rising.

It is probable that Tone's errand was known to Pitt; it is certain that Lord Edward Fitzgerald, another of the patriot leaders, who had been summoned to carry on more definite negotiations in Basle, revealed inadvertently as he returned the secret of his hopes to an agent of the English Cabinet. Vague as were the offers of the United Irishmen, they had been warmly welcomed by the French Government. Masters at home, the Directory were anxious to draw off the revolutionary enthusiasm which the French party of order dreaded as much as Burke himself to the channels of foreign conquest. They were already planning that descent of their army in the Alps upon Lombardy which was to give a fatal blow to one of their enemies, Austria; and they welcomed the notion of a French descent upon Ireland and an Irish revolt, which would give as fatal

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a blow to their other enemy, England. An army of 25,000 men under General Hoche was promised, a fleet was manned, and preparations were being made for the expedition during the summer. But the secret was ill kept, and the news of such an attempt was, we can hardly doubt, the ground of the obstinacy with which Pitt persisted in the teeth of the national feeling and of Burke's invectives in clinging to his purpose of concluding a peace. In October, 1796, Lord Malmesbury was despatched to Paris and negotiations were finally opened for that purpose. The terms which Pitt offered were terms of mutual restitution. France was to evacuate Holland and to restore Belgium to the Emperor. England on the other hand was to restore the colonies she had won to France, Holland, and Spain. As the English Minister had no power of dealing with the territories already ceded by Prussia and other states, such a treaty would have left France, as her eastern border, the line of the Rhine. But even had they desired peace at all, the Directors would have scorned it on terms such as these. While Malmesbury was negotiating indeed France was roused to new dreams of conquest by the victories of Napoleon Buonaparte. The genius of Carnot, the French Minister of War, had planned a joint advance upon Vienna by the French armies of Italy and the Rhine, the one under Buonaparte, the other under Moreau. The plan was only partly successful. Moreau, though he pushed forward through every obstacle to Bavaria, was compelled to fall back by the defeat of a lieutenant: and was only enabled by a masterly retreat through the Black Forest to reach the Rhine. But the disaster of Moreau was more than redeemed by the victories of Buonaparte. With the army which occupied the Riviera and the Maritime Alps the young general marched on Piedmont at the opening of the summer, separated its army from the Austrian troops, and forced the King of Sardinia to conclude a humiliating peace. A brilliant victory at the bridge of Lodi brought him to

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Milan, and drove the Austrians into the Tyrol. Lombardy was in the hands of the French, the Duchies south of the Po pillaged, and the Pope driven to purchase an armistice at enormous cost, before the Austrian armies, raised to a force of 50,000 men, again descended from the Tyrol for the relief of Mantua. But a fatal division of their forces by the Lake of Garda enabled Buonaparte to hurl them back broken upon Trent, and to shut up their general, Wurmser, in Mantua with the remnant of his men; while fresh victories at the bridge of Arcola and at Bassano drove back two new Austrian armies who advanced to Wurmser's rescue.

It was the success of Buonaparte which told on the resolve of the Directory to reject all terms of peace. After months of dilatory negotiations the offers of Lord Malmesbury were definitely declined, and the English envoy returned home at the end of the year. Every hour of his stay in Paris had raised higher hopes of success against England in the minds of the Directory. At the moment of his arrival Spain had been driven to declare war as their ally against Britain; and the Spanish and Dutch fleets were now at the French service for a struggle at sea. The merciless exactions of Buonaparte poured gold into the exhausted treasury; and the energy of Hoche rapidly availed itself of this supply to equip a force for operations in Ireland. At the opening of December he was ready to put to sea with a fleet of more than forty sail and 25,000 men; and the return of Lord Malmesbury was the signal for the despatch of his expedition from Brest. The fleet at Toulon, which was intended to co-operate with that at Brest, and which had sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar for that purpose, was driven into Port l'Orient by an English squadron: but contrary winds baffled the fleet which was watching Hoche, and his armament slipped away with little hindrance towards the Irish coast. Had it reached Ireland unbroken and under such a general, the island

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CHAP. IV. might well have been lost to the English Crown. But the winds fought against France, as they had fought against the Armada of Spain; and the ships were parted from one another by a gale which burst on them as they put to sea. Seventeen reached Bantry Bay, but hearing nothing of their leader or of the rest, they sailed back again to Brest, in spite of the entreaties of the soldiers to be suffered to land. Another division reached the Shannon to be scattered and driven home again by a second storm. Twelve vessels were wrecked or captured, and the frigate in which Hoche had embarked returned to port without having seen any of its companions. The invasion had failed, but the panic which it roused woke passions of cruelty and tyranny which turned Ireland into a hell. Soldiers and yeomanry marched over the country torturing and scourging the "croppies," as the Irish peasantry were termed from their short-cut hair; robbing, ravishing, and murdering at their will. The lightest suspicion, the most unfounded charges, were taken as warrants for bloodshed. So hideous were these outrages that the news of them as it reached England woke a thrill of horror in the minds of even the blindest Tories; but by the landowners who formed the Irish Parliament they were sanctioned in a Bill of Indemnity and protected for the future by an Insurrection Act. The terror however only woke a universal spirit of revolt. Ireland drank in greedily that hatred of England and of English rule which all the justice and moderation of later government has failed to destroy; and the United Irishmen looked with more passionate longing than ever to France.

*The
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for the
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Nor had France abandoned the design of invasion; while her victories made such a design every day more formidable. The war was going steadily in her favour. A fresh victory at Rivoli, the surrender of Mantua, and an advance through Styria on Vienna, enabled Buonaparte to wring a peace from England's one ally, Austria. The armistice was concluded in April, 1797, and the final treaty which was signed at Campo Formio in October

not only gave France the Ionian Islands, a part of the old territory of Venice (whose Italian possessions passed to the Emperor), as well as the Netherlands and the whole left bank of the Rhine, but united Lombardy with the Duchies south of the Po and the Papal States as far as the Rubicon into a "Cisalpine Republic," which was absolutely beneath her control. The withdrawal of Austria left France without an enemy on the Continent, and England without an ally. The stress of the war was pressing more heavily on her every day. A mutiny in the fleet was suppressed with difficulty. The news of Hoche's expedition brought about a run for gold which forced on the Bank a suspension of specie payments. It was in this darkest hour of the struggle that Burke passed away, protesting to the last against the peace which, in spite of his previous failure, Pitt was again striving to bring about by fresh negotiations at Lille. Peace seemed more needful than ever to him now that France was free to attack her enemy with the soldiers who had fought at Hohenlinden and Rivoli. Their way, indeed, lay across the sea, and at sea Britain was supreme. But her supremacy was threatened by a coalition of naval forces such as had all but crushed her in the American war. Again the Dutch and Spanish fleets were allied with the fleets of France; and it was necessary to watch Cadiz and the Scheldt as well as Brest and Toulon. A single victory of the three confederates, or even such a command of the Channel as they had held for months during the war with America, would enable the Directory to throw overwhelming armies not only on the shores of England, but on the shores of Ireland, and whatever might be the fate of the one enterprize, there could be little doubt of the success of the other. The danger was real; but it had hardly threatened England when it was dispelled by two great victories. The Spanish fleet, which put out to sea with twenty-seven sail of the line, was met on the fourteenth of February, 1797, by Admiral Jervis off Cape St. Vincent with a force of but fifteen; and driven

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back to Cadiz with a loss of four of its finest vessels. Disheartened as they were, however, their numbers still exceeded that of the force which blockaded them; and France counted with confidence on the fleet of Holland, which was ordered to join its own fleet at Brest. The aim of this union was to protect a fresh force in its descent upon Ireland, where the United Irishmen now declared themselves ready for revolt. But a yet sterner fortune awaited the Dutch than that which had fallen on the Spaniards. Their admiral, De Winter, who had quitted the Texel during a storm with eleven sail of the line and four frigates, fell in on the eleventh of October with a far larger fleet under Admiral Duncan off Camperdown. The Hollanders fought with a stubborn courage worthy of their old renown, and it was only when their ships were riddled with shot into mere wrecks that they fell into the hands of the English.

The French project for an expedition to Ireland hung on the junction of the Dutch fleet with that of Brest, and the command of the Channel which this junction would have given them. Such a command became impossible after the defeat of Camperdown. But the disappointment of their hopes of foreign aid only drove the adherents of revolt in Ireland to a rising of despair. The union of the national party, which had lasted to some extent from the American war, was now broken up. The Protestants of Ulster still looked for aid to France. The Catholics, on the other hand, were alienated from the French by their attack on religion and the priesthood; and the failure of the French expedition, while it damped the hopes of the Ulstermen, gave force to the demands of the Catholic party for a purely national rising. So fierce was this demand that the leaders of the United Irishmen were forced to fix on the spring of 1798 for the outbreak of an insurrection, in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who had some small military experience, was to take the command. But while yielding on this point to the Catholic section of their party they conciliated the Protestants by

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renewed appeals for aid to the Directory. In spite of its previous failures France again promised help; and a division was prepared during the winter for service in Ireland. But the passion of the nation was too intense to wait for its arrival. The government too acted with a prompt decision in face of the danger, and an arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald with three of their chief leaders in February, 1798, broke the plans of the insurgents. On the 23rd of May however, the day fixed for the opening of the revolt, the Catholic peasantry of the south rose in arms. Elsewhere their disorderly gatherings were easily dispersed by the yeomanry; but Wexford surrendered to 14,000 insurgents who marched on it, headed by a village priest, and the town at once became the centre of a formidable revolt.

Fortunately for the English rule the old religious hatred which had so often wrecked the hopes of Ireland broke out in the instant of this triumph. The Protestant inhabitants of Wexford were driven into the river or flung into prison. Another body of insurgents, frenzied by the cruelties of the royal troops, massacred a hundred Protestants in cool blood. The atrocities of the soldiers and the yeomanry were avenged with a fiendish ruthlessness. Loyalists were lashed and tortured in their turn, and every soldier taken was butchered without mercy. The result of these outrages was fatal to the insurrection. The Ulster Protestants, who formed the strength of the United Irishmen, stood sullenly aloof from rebels who murdered Protestants. The Catholic gentry threw themselves on the side of the government against a rising which threatened the country with massacre and anarchy. Few in fact had joined the insurgents in Wexford when Lord Lake appeared before their camp upon Vinegar Hill with a strong force of English troops on the 21st of May. The camp was stormed, and with the dispersion of its defenders the revolt came suddenly to an end. But its suppression came only just in time to prevent greater disasters; for a few

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weeks after the close of the rebellion the long-expected aid arrived from France. The news of the outbreak had forced the armament which was being equipped in the French ports to put to sea with forces utterly inadequate to the task it had set itself, but fresh aid was promised to follow, and the nine hundred soldiers who landed in August under General Humbert on the coast of Mayo showed by their first successes how formidable a centre they would have given to the revolt had the revolt held its ground. But in the two months which had passed since Vinegar Hill all trace of resistance to the English rule had been trodden out in blood, and Humbert found himself alone in a country exhausted and panic-stricken. He marched however boldly on Castlebar, broke a force of yeomanry and volunteers three times his number, and only surrendered when Lord Cornwallis, who had succeeded to the Lord Lieutenancy, faced him with thirty thousand men.

French
designs on
India.

Of the threefold attack on which the Directory had relied for the ruin of England two parts had now broken down. Humbert's surrender and the failure of the native insurrection left little hope for future attack on the side of Ireland. The naval confederacy which was to rob England of the command of the seas had been foiled by the utter wreck of the Dutch fleet, and the imprisonment of the Spanish fleet in Cadiz. But the genius of Buonaparte had seized on the schemes for a rising against the English rule in Hindostan, and widened them into a project of all but world-wide conquest. At this time the strongest and most vigorous of the Indian powers was that of Mysore, at the southern extremity of the peninsula, where a Mussulman state had been built up by the genius of an adventurer, Hyder Ali. In the days when the English were winning their supremacy over the Carnatic, Hyder had been their chief difficulty; and his attack had once brought them to the verge of ruin. The hostility of his son Tippoo was even more bitter; but the victories of Lord Cornwallis had taught the Sultan of Mysore that he

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was no match for the British power single-handed; and his hopes, like those of the United Irishmen, were fixed upon France. He was striving to get aid from the Afghans and from the Nizam, but what he most counted on for the expulsion of the English from the Carnatic was a force of thirty thousand French soldiers. Letters requesting such a force were despatched by him to France in 1797. Buonaparte had already fixed on Mysore as a basis of operations against the British rule in Hindostan; and after dismissing as impracticable a project suggested to him on his return from Italy after the treaty of Campo Formio for a descent upon England itself, he laid before the Directory a plan for the conquest and occupation of Egypt as a preliminary to a campaign in Southern India. Utterly as this plan was foiled in the future, it was far from being the wild dream which it has often been considered. Both the Ministry and East Indian Directors were roused into anxiety by the first news of Buonaparte's expedition. Lord Wellesley, the Governor-General of British India, was warned of a possible attack from the Red Sea. Four thousand soldiers were hurried off to reinforce his army; while the English fleet watched anxiously in the Mediterranean. But so perfect was the secrecy with which the French plans were combined that Buonaparte was able to put to sea in May, 1798, with a force of 30,000 veterans drawn from the army of Italy, and making himself master of Malta as he passed to land near Alexandria at the close of June.

The conquest of Egypt proved as easy and complete as Buonaparte had hoped. The Mamelukes were routed in the battle of the Pyramids; Cairo was occupied; and the French troops pushed rapidly up the valley of the Nile. Their general meanwhile showed his genius for government by a masterly organization of the conquered country, by the conciliation of his new subjects, and by measures for the enrolment of native soldiers which would in a short time have placed him at the head

The
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the Nile.

CHAP. IV. of a formidable army. Of his ultimate aim there can be
 England and Revolutionary France. 1792-1801. little doubt; for he had hardly landed at Alexandria when
 he despatched the news of his arrival and promises of support
 to Tippoo. All chance however of success in his projects
 hung on the maintenance of communications with France.
 With Italy, with the Ionian Islands, with Alexandria in
 French holding, it was all but impossible to prevent sup-
 plies of men and arms from being forwarded to Egypt, so
 long as the French fleet remained in the waters of the
 Mediterranean and kept the English force concentrated by
 the necessity of watching its movements. But the French
 were hardly masters of Egypt when their fleet ceased to
 exist. The thirteen men of war which had escorted the
 expedition were found by Admiral Nelson in Aboukir
 Bay, moored close to the coast in a line guarded at either
 end by gunboats and batteries. Nelson resolved to thrust
 his ships between the French and the shore. On the
 morning of the 1st of August his own flag-ship led the
 way in this attack; and after a terrible fight of twelve
 hours, nine of the French vessels were captured and
 destroyed, two were burned, and five thousand French
 seamen were killed or made prisoners. "Victory," cried
 Nelson, "is not a name strong enough for such a scene."
 Few victories indeed in history have produced more effec-
 tive results than the battle of the Nile. The French
 flag was swept from the waters of the Mediterranean.
 All communication between France and Buonaparte's army
 was cut off; and his hopes of making Egypt a starting-
 point for the conquest of India fell at a blow. To hold
 Egypt itself soon became difficult, for a desperate revolt
 broke out at the news of Nelson's victory in the streets
 of Cairo, and a Turkish army advanced from Syria to
 recover the valley of the Nile.

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Secure against invasion at home as against rebellion
 in Ireland, secure too against the dangers that threatened
 her rule in India, and mistress of the seas, England
 was free in her turn to attack the assailant who had

so long threatened her very existence. And in such an
 attack she was aided at this moment by the temper of
 the European powers, and by the ceaseless aggressions of
 France. The treaties of Basle and Campo Formio were far
 from being accepted by the Directory as a final settlement
 of the relations of France with Europe. Some faint
 remnant of the older dreams of freeing oppressed peoples
 may have lingered in the aid which it gave to the rising
 of the subject districts of Basle and Vaud against their
 Bernese masters in the opening of 1798. But mere
 greed of gold was seen in the plunder of the treasury of
 Berne, a plunder which served to equip the army that
 sailed with Buonaparte to the shores of Egypt, and to
 recruit the exhausted treasury of the Directory; and an
 ambition, as reckless as this greed, broke out in an
 attack on the mountain cantons, states whose democratic
 institutions gave no such excuse for hostility as had
 been afforded by the aristocracy of Berne. A French
 decree abolished the Swiss Confederation, and the inde-
 pendence of its several states, and established in their
 place an Helvetic Republic modelled on a plan sent from
 Paris, and placed under the protection of France. The
 mountain cantons rose against this overthrow of a freedom
 compared with which the freedom of France was but of
 yesterday; but desperate as was their struggle they were
 overwhelmed by numbers, and the men of Uri, of Unter-
 walden and of Schwytz bowed for the first time to a
 foreign conqueror.

The overthrow of this immemorial house of freedom
 opened the eyes of the blindest enthusiast to the real
 character of the French aggressions. Even in the group
 of young English poets, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and
 Southey, who had clung till now to the dream of the
 Revolution, of a Europe freed and regenerated by the
 arms of the new republic, all belief in such a dream
 passed finally away. But the France of the Directory
 would have cared little for this alienation of the peoples,

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CHAP. IV. had it not been backed by the revived hostility of their kings. What England counted on in her efforts for a revival of the coalition was the resentment of Austria at the aggressions which the Directory had ever since the peace of Campo Formio been carrying on in Italy. In the opening of 1798 a French force entered Rome, set up a Roman republic, and carried off Pius VI. a prisoner to Siena; while the King of Sardinia was driven to admit French garrisons into his fortresses. Austria however was still too weak after her defeats to listen to Pitt's advances, had Pitt stood alone. But Russia was now about to take a new part in European affairs. Under Catharine the Second this power had availed itself of the war against France in the west to carry out its own projects of conquest in eastern Europe; and, as we have seen, Pitt had watched its advance at the opening of the Revolution with far greater dread than the movements in France. It was in fact the need which the two German states felt of balancing the Russian annexations in Poland by annexations of their own which had paralyzed their armies on the Rhine and saved France at the moment of her greatest danger in 1793. It is probable that the Directory still counted on the persistence of Russia in a similar policy, and believed that Catharine would see in their attack on Egypt and the Turks only a fresh opportunity for conquests on the Danube. But the sudden greatness of France had warned Russia that its policy of selfishness had been carried too far. It had allowed the Republic to tower into supremacy over the Continent, and if once such a supremacy was firmly established it would prove a fatal obstacle to the Russian advance. France would again, as under the monarchy, aim at the restoration of Poland; she would again bar the way to Constantinople; and her action would be backed by the weight of all western Europe, which had been thrown into her scale by the policy of the very state she defied. To avert such a result it was necessary to restore that balance of the Continent by which France and

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the German powers held one another in check; and with a view to this restoration Russia suddenly declared itself an enemy of France. Catharine's successor, the Czar Paul, set aside the overtures of the Directory. A close alliance was formed with Austria, and while an Imperial army gathered on the Bavarian frontier Russian troops hurried to the west.

The appearance of this new element in the struggle changed its whole conditions; and it was with renewed hope that Pitt lavished subsidies on the two allies at the close of 1798. But his preparations for the new strife were far from being limited to efforts abroad. In England he had found fresh resources in an Income-Tax, from which he anticipated an annual return of ten millions. Heavy as the tax was, and it amounted to ten per cent. on all incomes above £200 a year, the dogged resolution of the people to fight on was seen in the absence of all opposition to this proposal. What was of even greater importance was to remove all chance of fresh danger from Ireland. Pitt's temper was of too statesmanlike a mould to rest content with the mere suppression of insurrection or with the system of terrorism which for the moment held the country down. His disgust at "the bigoted fury of Irish Protestants" had backed Lord Cornwallis in checking the reprisals of his troops and of the Orangemen; but the hideous cruelty which he was forced to witness brought about a firm resolve to put an end to the farce of "Independence" which left Ireland helpless in such hands. The political necessity for a union of the two islands had been brought home to every English statesman by the course of the Irish Parliament during the disputes over the Regency. While England repelled the claims of the Prince of Wales to the Regency as of right, the legislature of Ireland admitted them. As the only union left between the two peoples since the concession of legislative independence was their obedience to a common ruler, such an act might conceivably have ended in their

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entire severance; and the sense of this danger secured a welcome in England for the proposal which Pitt made at the opening of 1799 to unite the two Parliaments. The opposition of the Irish boroughmongers was naturally stubborn and determined, and when the plan was introduced into the Parliament at Dublin, it was only saved from rejection by a single vote. But with men like these it was a sheer question of gold; and their assent was bought with a million in money, and with a liberal distribution of pensions and peerages. Base and shameless as were such means, Pitt may fairly plead that they were the only means by which the bill for the Union could have been passed. As the matter was finally arranged in June, 1800, one hundred Irish members became part of the House of Commons at Westminster, and twenty-eight temporal with four spiritual peers, chosen for each Parliament by their fellows, took their seats in the House of Lords. Commerce between the two countries was freed from all restrictions and every trading privilege of the one thrown open to the other, while taxation was proportionately distributed between the two peoples.

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While the Union was being pushed slowly forward, the struggle abroad was passing through strange vicissitudes. At the opening of 1799 the efforts of the new coalition were crowned with success in every quarter. Though Naples had been turned into a Parthenopean Republic at the close of the previous year, and the French supremacy extended over the whole peninsula, the descent of an Austrian army from the Tyrol at the end of March, and a victory of the Russian and Austrian forces at Cassano, compelled the French army to evacuate Southern Italy and Lombardy, while a fresh defeat at Novi flung it back on the Maritime Alps. A campaign conducted with more varying success drove the armies which advanced into Germany back over the Rhine. In Switzerland however the stubborn energy of Massena enabled his soldiers to

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hold their ground against the combined attack of Russian and Austrian forces; and the attempt of a united force of Russians and English to wrest Holland from its French masters was successfully repulsed. Twelve of the thirty thousand men who formed this army consisted of English troops; and Sir Ralph Abercromby succeeded in landing at their head, in seizing what remained of the Dutch fleet at the Texel, and in holding General Brune at bay when he advanced with superior forces. But Abercromby was superseded in his command by the Duke of York; and in another month the new leader was glad to conclude a convention by which the safe withdrawal of his troops was secured.

In the East however England was more successful. Even had Buonaparte not been baffled in his plans of a descent on Southern India from the basis of Egypt by the battle of the Nile, they would have been frustrated by the energy of Lord Wellesley. Mysore was invaded, its capital stormed, and Tippoo slain, before a French soldier could have been despatched to its aid. But foiled as were his dreams of Indian conquest, the daring genius of the French general plunged into wilder projects. He conceived the design of the conquest of Syria and of the creation of an army among its warlike mountaineers. "With a hundred thousand men on the banks of the Euphrates," he said years afterwards, "I might have gone to Constantinople or India, I might have changed the face of the world." Gaza was taken, Jaffa stormed, and ten thousand French soldiers advanced under their young general on Acre. Acre was the key of Syria, and its reduction was the first step in these immense projects. "Once possessed of Acre," wrote Napoleon, "the army would have gone to Damascus and the Euphrates. The Christians of Syria, the Druses, the Armenians, would have joined us. The provinces of the Ottoman Empire were ready for a change, and were only waiting for a man." But Acre was stubbornly held by the Turks, the

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French battering train was captured at sea by an English captain, Sir Sidney Smith, whose seamen aided in the defence of the place, and after a loss of three thousand men by sword and plague, the besiegers were forced to fall back upon Egypt.

Egypt indeed was more than ever their own, for their army had now penetrated to the cataracts of the Nile, and a Turkish force which landed near Alexandria was cut to pieces by Buonaparte in the battle of Aboukir. But the news of defeat at home and the certainty that all wider hopes in the East were at an end, induced him only a month after his victory to leave his army. With a couple of frigates he set sail for France; and his arrival in Paris was soon followed by a change in the government. The Directors were divided among themselves, while the disasters of their administration made them hateful to the country; and a revolution brought about by the soldiery on the 10th of November put an end to their power. In the new system which followed three consuls took the place of the Directors; but the system only screened the government of a single man, for under the name of First Consul Buonaparte became in effect sole ruler of the country. His energy at once changed the whole face of European affairs. The offers of peace which he made to England and Austria were intended to do little more than to shake the coalition, and gain breathing time for the organization of a new force which was gathering in secrecy at Dijon, while Moreau with the army of the Rhine pushed again along the Danube. The First Consul crossed the Saint Bernard with this army in the spring of 1800, and on the 14th of June a victory at Marengo left the Austrian army, which had just succeeded in reducing Genoa, helpless in his hands. It was by the surrender of all Lombardy to the Oglio that the defeated general obtained an armistice for his troops; and a similar truce arrested the march of Moreau, who had captured Munich and was pushing on to Vienna.

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The armistice only added to the difficulties of Buonaparte's opponents, for Russia, as anxious not to establish a German supremacy as she had been to weaken the supremacy of France, had withdrawn from the contest as soon as the coalition seemed to be successful; and Austria was only held back from peace by her acceptance of English subsidies. But though she fought on, the resumption of the war in the autumn failed to reverse the fortune of arms. The Austrians were driven back on Vienna; and on the second of December Moreau crushed their army on the Iser in the victory of Hohenlinden. But the aim of the First Consul was only to wrest peace from his enemies by these triumphs; while the expiration of her engagements with England left his opponent free to lay down her arms. In February, 1801, therefore the Continental War was brought suddenly to an end by the Peace of Luneville.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLAND AND NAPOLEON.

1801—1815.

*The New
Europe.*

THE treaty of Luneville was of far greater import than the treaties which had ended the struggle of the first coalition. It was in effect the close of the attack which revolutionary France had directed against the Continental powers. With it expired the outer energy of the Revolution, as its inner energy expired with the elevation of Buonaparte to the First Consulate. The change that the French onset had wrought in the aspect of Europe had no doubt been great. In the nine years which had passed since the earlier league of the powers against her, France had won all and more than all that the ambition of her older statesmen had ever aimed at. She had absorbed the Netherlands. She was practically mistress of Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont, whose dependent republics covered her frontier; while she had revived that union with Spain which had fallen for a time with the Family Compact of the House of Bourbon. But in spite of this growth the dread of French aggression was far less keenly felt by her neighbour states than in the early years of the war. What they had dreaded then was not so much the political reconstruction of Europe as the revolutionary enthusiasm which would have pushed this political reconstruction into a social revolution. But at the opening of the nineteenth century the enthusiasm of France had



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Scammon's Map of Europe



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faded away. She was again Christian. She was again practically monarchical. What her neighbours saw in her after all these years of change was little more than the old France with a wider frontier; and now that they could look upon those years as a whole, it was clear that much of this widening of her borders was only a fair counterbalance for the widened borders of the states around her. If France had grown great, other powers had grown in greatness too. If France had pushed her frontier to the Rhine and established dependencies across the Rhone and the Alps, Russia during the same period had annexed the bulk of Poland, and the two great German powers had enlarged themselves both to the east and the west. The Empire had practically ceased to be; but its ruin had given fresh extension and compactness to the states which had profited by it. The cessions of Prussia had been small beside her gains. The losses of Austria had been more than counterbalanced in Italy by her acquisition of Venice, and far more than counterbalanced by secularizations and annexations within Germany itself.

Although therefore the old Europe and its balance of power had passed away, the new Europe which had taken its place presented a balance of power which might be regarded as even more effective; and the peace of Lunéville was in reality the recognition on both sides of a European settlement on the basis of such a balance. But in the mind of Buonaparte it was far more than this. It was the first step in an entire reversal of the policy which Revolutionary France had pursued in her dealings with the world. It was a return to the older policy of the French monarchy. Under the guidance of the revolutionists France had striven for supremacy among the states of Europe. But for such a supremacy the First Consul cared comparatively little. What he cared for was what Choiseul and the statesmen who followed him cared for, the supremacy of the world. And he saw that with every year of war on the Continent such a supremacy

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grew more distant than ever. The very victories of France indeed were playing into the hands of England. Amidst all the triumphs of the revolutionary war the growth of the British Empire had been steady and ceaseless. She was more than ever mistress of the sea. The mastery of Holland by the French had only ended in the removal of one of the obstacles to such a mastery by the ruin of the Dutch navy, and the transfer of the rich Dutch colonies to the British crown. The winning of Egypt had but spurred her to crush the only Mussulman power that could avert her rule over southern India. But her growth was more than a merely territorial growth. She was turning her command of the seas to a practical account. Not only was she monopolizing the carrying trade of the European nations, but the sudden uprush of her industries was making her the workshop as well as the market of the world. From the first the mind of Buonaparte had been set on a struggle with this growing world-power. Even amidst his earliest victories he had dreamed of wresting from England her dominion in the East; and if his Egyptian expedition had done nothing for India, it had secured in Egypt itself a stepping-stone for further efforts. But now that France was wholly at his disposal, the First Consul resolved to free his hands from the strife with the Continent, and to enter on that struggle with Britain which was henceforth to be the task of his life.

*Pitt's
position.*

The significance then of the Peace of Luneville lay in this, not only that it was the close of the earlier revolutionary struggle for supremacy in Europe, the abandonment by France of her effort to "liberate the peoples," to force new institutions on the nations about her by sheer dint of arms; but that it marked the concentration of all her energies on a struggle with Britain for the supremacy of the world. For England herself the event which accompanied it, the sudden withdrawal of William Pitt from office which took place in the very month of the

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treaty, was hardly less significant. To men of our day the later position of William Pitt seems one of almost tragic irony. An economist heaping up millions of debt, a Peace Minister dragged into the costliest of wars, he is the very type of the baffled statesman; and the passionate loyalty with which England clung to him through the revolutionary struggle is one of the least intelligible passages of our history. But if England clung to Pitt through these years of gloom, it was because then more than ever she saw in him her own representative. His strength had lain throughout in his reflection of public opinion: and public opinion saw itself reflected in him still. At the outset of his career the set of opinion had been towards a larger and a more popular policy than of old. New facilities of communication, new industrial energy, and a quick accumulation of wealth, as well as the social changes which followed hard on these economical changes, all pointed forward to political progress, to an adaptation of our institutions to the varied conditions of the time. The nation was quivering with a new sense of life; and it faced eagerly questions of religion, of philanthropy, of education, of trade, as one after another they presented themselves before it. Above all it clung to the young minister whose ideas were its own, who alien as his temper seemed from that of an innovator, came boldly to the front with projects for a new Parliament, a new finance, a new international policy, a new imperial policy, a new humanitarian policy. It was this oneness of Pitt's temper with the temper of the men he ruled that made him sympathize, in spite of the alarm of the court, with the first movements of the revolution in France, and deal fairly, if coldly, with its after-course. It was this that gave him strength to hold out so long against a struggle with it.

But as the alarm deepened, as the nation saw its social, political, and religious traditions alike threatened, the bulk of Englishmen swung round into an attitude of fierce

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resistance. The craving for self-preservation hushed all other cravings. What men looked for in Pitt now was not the economist or the reformer, but the son of Chatham, the heir of his father's courage, of his father's faith in the greatness of England. And what they looked for they found. Pitt was no born War Minister; he had none of the genius that commands victory, or of the passionate enthusiasm that rouses a nation to great deeds of arms. But he had faith in England. Even when she stood alone against the world he never despaired. Reading him, as we read him now, we see the sickness and the gloom of his inner soul; but no sign betrayed it to the world. As the tempest gathered about them, men looked with trust that deepened into awe on the stately figure that embodied their faith in England's fortunes, and huddled in the darkness round "the pilot that weathered the storm." But there were deeper and less conscious grounds for their trust in him. Pitt reflected far more than the nation's resolve. He reflected the waverings and inconsistencies of its political temper in a way that no other man did. In the general swing round to an attitude of resistance, the impulse of progress had come utterly to an end. Men doubted of the truth of principles that seemed to have brought about the horrors of the Revolution. They listened to Burke as he built up his theory of political immobility on the basis of an absolute perfection in the constitution of things as they were. But even in this moment of reaction they still clung unconsciously to a belief in something better, to a trust that progress would again be possible, and to the man who reflected their trust. Like them, Pitt could understand little of the scene about him, that seething ocean of European change where states vanished like dreams, and the very elements of social life seemed to melt in a mist; his mind, like theirs, was baffled with doubt and darkness, with the seeming suicide of freedom, the seeming triumph of violence and wrong. But baffled and bewildered as he was, he never ceased to believe in liberty,

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or to hope that the work of reform which he had begun might yet be carried into effect.

It was as the representative of this temper of the people at large, of its mingled mood of terror at the new developements of freedom, and yet of faith in freedom itself, of its dread of progress and yet its hope of a time when a larger national life should again become possible, that Pitt had gathered the nation round him from the opening of the war. Much indeed of the seeming weakness and uncertainty of his statesmanship throughout the struggle sprang from the fidelity with which he reflected this double aspect of national opinion. He has been blamed for fighting the French Revolution at all, as he has been blamed for not entering on an anti-revolutionary crusade. But his temper was that of the nation as a whole. He shrank from the fanaticism of Burke as he shrank from the fanaticism of Tom Paine: his aim was not to crush France or the Revolution, but to bring the struggle with them to such an end as might enable England to return in safety to the work of progress which the struggle had interrupted. And it was this that gave significance to his fall. It was a sign that the time had come when the national union which Pitt embodied must dissolve with the disappearance of the force that created it; when resistance had done its work, and the arrest of all national movement had come to an end with the attitude of mere resistance from which it sprang; when in face of a new France and a new French policy England could again return to her normal political life, and the impulses towards progress which had received so severe a check in 1792 could again flow in their older channels. In such a return Pitt himself took the lead; and his proposal of Catholic emancipation was as significant of a new æra of English life as the Peace of Luneville was significant of a new settlement of Europe.

In Pitt's mind the Union which he brought about in 1800 was more than a mere measure for the security of

Catholic
Emanci-
pation.

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the one island; it was a first step in the regeneration of the other. The legislative connexion of the two countries was only part of the plan which he had conceived for the conciliation of Ireland. With the conclusion of the Union indeed, his projects of free trade between the two countries, projects which had been defeated a few years back by the folly of the Irish Parliament, came quietly into play; and in spite of insufficient capital and social disturbance the growth of the trade, shipping, and manufactures of Ireland has gone on without a check from that time to this. The change which brought Ireland directly under the common Parliament was followed too by a gradual revision of its oppressive laws and an amendment in their administration; while taxation was lightened, and a faint beginning made of public instruction. But in Pitt's mind the great means of conciliation was the concession of religious equality. In proposing to the English Parliament the union of the two countries he pointed out that when thus joined to a Protestant country like England all danger of a Catholic supremacy in Ireland, even should Catholic disabilities be removed, would be practically at an end. In such a case, he suggested that "an effectual and adequate provision for the Catholic clergy" would be a security for their loyalty. His words gave strength to the hopes of "Catholic Emancipation," as the removal of what remained of the civil disabilities of Catholics was called, which were held out by his agent, Lord Castlereagh, in Ireland itself as a means of hindering any opposition to the project of Union on the part of the Catholics. It was agreed on all sides that their opposition would have secured its defeat; and the absence of such a Catholic opposition showed the new trust in Pitt which was awakened by the hints of Lord Castlereagh. The trust had good grounds to go on. After the passing of the bill Pitt prepared to lay before his Cabinet a measure which would have raised not only the Irish Catholic but the Irish Dissenter to a perfect equality

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of civil rights. He proposed to remove all religious tests which limited the exercise of the franchise, or which were required for admission to Parliament, the magistracy, the bar, municipal offices, or posts in the army or the service of the State. An oath of allegiance and of fidelity to the Constitution was substituted for the Sacramental test; while the loyalty of the Catholic and Dissenting clergy was secured by a grant of some provision to both on the part of the State. To win over the Episcopal Church to such an equality measures were added for strengthening its modes of discipline, as well as for increasing the stipends of its poorer ministers, while a commutation of tithes was planned as a means of removing a constant source of quarrel between the Protestant clergy and the Irish people.

But the scheme was too large and statesmanlike to secure the immediate assent of the Cabinet; and before that assent could be won or the plan laid with full ministerial sanction before the King, it was communicated through the treachery of the Chancellor, Lord Loughborough, to George the Third. "I count any man my personal enemy," George broke out angrily to Dundas, "who proposes any such measure." Pitt answered this outburst by submitting his whole plan to the King. "The political circumstances under which the exclusive laws originated," he wrote, "arising either from the conflicting power of hostile and nearly balanced sects, from the apprehension of a Popish Queen as successor, a disputed succession and a foreign pretender, a division in Europe between Catholic and Protestant Powers, are no longer applicable to the present state of things." But argument was wasted upon George the Third. In spite of the decision of the lawyers whom he consulted, the King declared himself bound by his Coronation Oath to maintain the tests; and his obstinacy was only strengthened by a knowledge that such a refusal must drive Pitt from office. George was weary of his minister's supremacy.

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He was longing for servants who would leave him more than a show of power, and he chose his ground for a struggle with all the cunning of his earlier years. It was by his command of public opinion that Pitt had been able to force his measures on the King. But in the question of Catholic Emancipation George knew that opinion was not with his minister, but with himself. On this point his bigotry was at one with the bigotry of the bulk of his subjects, as well as with their political distrust of Catholics and Irishmen. He persisted therefore in his refusal; and it was followed by the event he foresaw. In February, 1801, at the moment of the Peace of Luneville, William Pitt resigned his office into the hands of the King.

*The
Addington
Ministry.*

It was with a sense of relief that George found himself freed from the great minister whose temper was so alien from his own. But it was with a yet greater sense of relief that he saw him followed into retirement not only by Lord Grenville, but by nearly all the more liberal section of the ministry, by men like Wyndham and Lord Spenser, the representatives of the "Old Whigs" who had joined Pitt on the disruption of their party through the French Revolution. Such a union indeed could hardly have lasted much longer. The terror which had so long held these Whigs in their alliance with the Tories who formed the bulk of the administration was now at an end; and we have already seen their pressure for a more liberal policy in the action of Lord Fitzwilliam as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. But the question of Emancipation finally brought about a restoration of the natural position of parties; and from this moment the old Whigs, who accepted Lord Grenville as their head, fell into alliance with the more revolutionary Whigs who had remained faithful to Fox. The Whig party thus became again a powerful element in English politics, while in face of the reunited Whigs stood the Tories, relieved like themselves from the burthen of an alliance which grew

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hourly more distasteful. The bulk of the old Ministry returned in a few days to office with Mr. Addington at their head, and his administration received the support of the whole Tory party in Parliament.

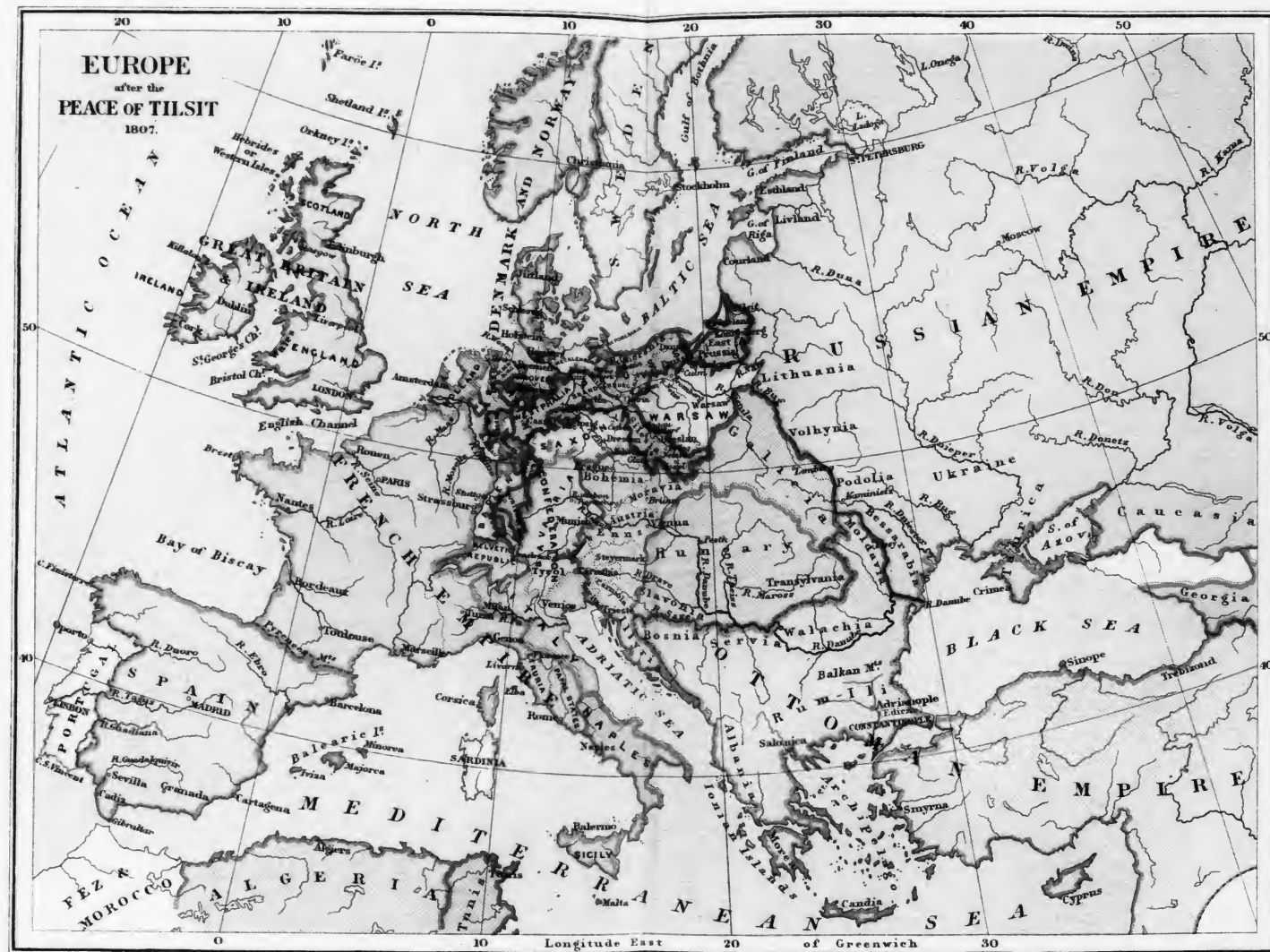
Without the walls of Parliament however the nation looked on such a change with dismay. Addington was regarded as a weak and narrow-minded man; and the favour with which the King welcomed him was due to a consciousness of their common bigotry. Of Lord Hawkesbury, who succeeded Lord Grenville in the conduct of foreign affairs, nothing was known outside the House of Commons. It was with anxiety that England found itself guided by men like these at a time when every hour brought darker news. The scarcity of bread was mounting to a famine. Taxes were raised anew, and yet the loan for the year amounted to five and twenty millions. The country stood utterly alone; while the peace of Luneville secured France from all hostility on the Continent. And it was soon plain that this peace was only the first step in a new policy on the part of the First Consul. What he had done was to free his hands for a decisive conflict with Britain itself, both as a world-power and as a centre of wealth. England was at once the carrier of European commerce and the workshop of European manufactures. While her mines, her looms, her steam-engines, were giving her almost a monopoly of industrial production, her merchant ships sufficed not only to spread her own products through the world, but to carry to every part of it the products of other countries. Though the war had already told on both these sources of wealth, it was far from having told fatally. It had long closed France indeed to English exports, while the waste of wealth in so wide a strife had lessened the buying power of Europe at large. But in Europe the loss was to some extent made up for the moment by the artificial demand for supplies which war creates; the home market still sufficed to absorb a vast quantity of manufactures; and America, which was

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fast growing into the most important of English customers, remained unaffected by the struggle. Industry had thus suffered but little loss, while commerce believed itself to have greatly gained. All rivals save one had in fact been swept from the sea; the carrying trade of France and Holland alike had been transferred to the British flag, and the conquest of their wealthier settlements had thrown into British hands the whole colonial trade of the world.

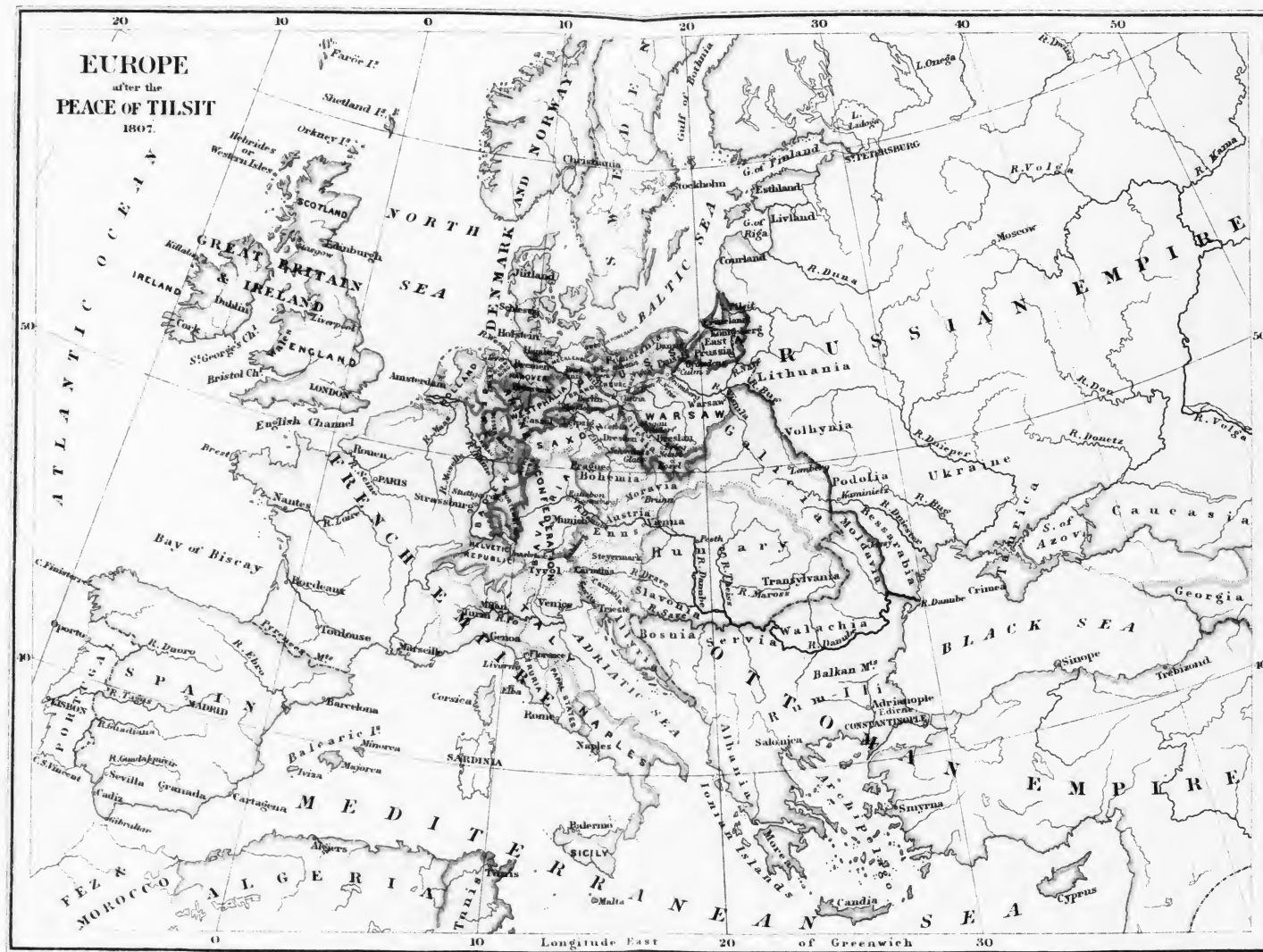
*League of
Neutrals.*

To strike at England's wealth had been among the projects of the Directory: it was now the dream of the First Consul. It was in vain for England to produce, if he shut her out of every market. Her carrying-trade must be annihilated if he closed every port against her ships. It was this gigantic project of a "Continental System" that revealed itself as soon as Buonaparte became finally master of France. From France itself and its dependencies in Holland and the Netherlands English trade was already excluded. But Italy also was shut against her after the Peace of Luneville, and Spain not only closed her own ports but forced Portugal to break with her English ally. In the Baltic Buonaparte was more active than even in the Mediterranean. In a treaty with America, which was destined to bring this power also in the end into his great attack, he had formally recognized the rights of neutral vessels which England was hourly disputing; and in her disregard of them he not only saw the means of bringing the northern powers into his system of exclusion, but of drawing on their resources for a yet more decisive blow. He was set upon challenging not only England's wealth but her world-empire; and his failure in Egypt had taught him that the first condition of success in such an enterprize was to wrest from her her command of the seas. The only means of doing this lay in a combination of naval powers; and the earlier efforts of France had left but one naval combination for Buonaparte to try. The Directory had been able to assail England at sea by the



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joint action of the French fleet with those of Holland and of Spain. But the Spanish navy had been crippled by the battle of Cape St. Vincent, and the Dutch fleet destroyed in the victory of Camperdown. The only powers which now possessed naval resources were the powers of the North. The fleets of Denmark, Sweden, and Russia numbered forty sail of the line, and they had been untouched by the strife. Both the Scandinavian states represented the severity with which Britain enforced that right of search which had brought about their armed neutrality at the close of the American war; while Denmark was besides an old ally of France, and her sympathies were still believed to be French. The First Consul therefore had little trouble in enlisting them in a league of neutrals, which was in effect a declaration of war against England, and which Prussia as before showed herself ready to join.

Russia indeed seemed harder to gain. Since Paul's accession she had been the moving spirit in the confederacy which had only been broken up by the victory of Marengo. But the spirit of revolutionary aggression which had nominally roused Paul to action, had, as the Czar believed, been again hushed by the First Consul. Buonaparte had yielded to his remonstrances in preserving the independence of Naples and Sardinia; and with Italian subtlety he now turned the faith in French moderation which these concessions created in the mind of Paul into a dread of the ambition of England and a jealousy of her sovereignty of the seas. But his efforts would have been in vain had they not fallen in with the general current of Russian policy. From the first outbreak of the Revolutionary struggle Russia, as we have seen, had taken advantage of the strife among the Western nations to push forward her own projects in the East. Catharine had aimed at absorbing Poland, and at becoming the mistress of European Turkey. In the first she had been successful, but the second still remained unaccomplished when her empire passed to her son. For a time Paul

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had been diverted from the task by the turn of affairs in Western Europe, where the victories of the French Republic threatened an utter overthrow of the powers opposed to it, which would have foiled the plans of Russia by bringing about a European union that must have paralyzed her advance. The Czar therefore acted strictly in the spirit of Catharine's policy when he stepped in again to feed the strife by raising the combatants to a new equality, and when he withdrew his armies at the very moment that this was done. But successful as his diversion had been, Paul saw that one obstacle remained in the way of his projects upon Turkey. Pitt had never hidden his opposition to the Russian plans. His whole policy at the outbreak of the Revolution had been guided by a desperate hope of binding the powers again together to prevent the ruin of Poland, or of hindering it by a league of England and France alone. Foiled as he had been in these efforts, he was even more resolute to check the advance of Russia on Constantinople. Already her growing empire in India was telling on the European policy of England; and the security of Egypt, of Syria, of Turkey at large, was getting deemed to be essential to the maintenance of her communication with her great dependency. The French descent on Egypt, the attack on Syria, had bound Britain and Turkey together; and Paul saw that an attack on the one would bring him a fresh opponent in the other.

*The
League
broken up.*

It was to check the action of Britain in the East that the Czar now turned to the French Consul, and seconded his efforts for the formation of a naval confederacy in the North, while his minister, Rostopchin, planned a division of the Turkish Empire in Europe between Russia and her allies. Austria was to be satisfied with the western provinces of the Balkan peninsula; Russia gained Moldavia, Bulgaria, and Roumelia as far as Constantinople; while Greece fell to the lot of France, whose troops were already on the Italian shores, at a day's sail from the Illyrian coast.

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A squabble over Malta, which had been blockaded since its capture by Buonaparte, and which surrendered at last to a British fleet, but whose possession the Czar claimed as his own on the ground of an alleged election as Grand Master of the Order of St. John, served as a pretext for a quarrel with England; and at the close of 1800 Paul openly prepared for hostilities. In October he announced an armed neutrality; in December he seized three hundred English vessels in his ports, and sequestered all English goods found in his Empire. The Danes, who throughout the year had been struggling to evade the British right of search, at once joined this neutral league, and were followed by Sweden in their course. It was plain that, as soon as the spring of 1801 opened the Baltic, the fleets of the three Powers would act in practical union with those of France and Spain. But the command of the seas which such a union threatened was a matter for England of life and death, for at this very moment the Peace of Luneville left Buonaparte without a foe on the Continent, and able to deal as he would with the whole military resources of France. Once master of the Channel he could throw a force on the southern coast of England which she had no means of meeting in the field. But dexterous as the combination was, it was shattered at a blow. On the first of April, 1801, a British fleet of eighteen men-of-war forced the passage of the Belt, appeared before Copenhagen, and at once attacked the city and its fleet. In spite of a brave resistance from the Danish batteries and gunboats six Danish ships were taken, and the Crown Prince was forced to conclude an armistice which enabled the English ships to enter the Baltic, where the Russian fleet was still detained by the ice. But their work was really over. The seizure of English goods and the declaration of war had bitterly irritated the Russian nobles, whose sole outlet for the sale of the produce of their vast estates was thus closed to them; and on the twenty-fourth of March, nine days before the battle of

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French
 lose
 Egypt.

Copenhagen, Paul fell in a midnight attack by conspirators in his own palace. With Paul fell the Confederacy of the North. The policy of his successor, the Czar Alexander, was far more in unison with the general feeling of his subjects; in June a Convention between England and Russia settled the vexed questions of the right of search and contraband of war, and this Convention was accepted by Sweden and Denmark.

The First Consul's disappointment was keen; but he saw clearly that with this dissolution of the Northern alliance the war came virtually to an end. He no longer had any means of attacking Britain save by the efforts of France itself, and even with the aid of Holland and Spain France was at this moment helpless before the supremacy of England at sea. On the other hand the continuance of the struggle would give triumph after triumph to his foes. One such blow had already fallen. Even in the midst of his immense schemes against Britain at home, Buonaparte had not abandoned the hope of attacking her in India. Egypt was needful to such a scheme; and from the first moment of his power he strained every nerve to retain Egypt in the hands of France. Menou, who commanded there, was ordered to hold the country; an expedition was fitted out in the Spanish ports for its relief; and light vessels were hurried from the Italian coast with arms and supplies. But at the very moment of the attack on Copenhagen, a stroke as effective wrecked his projects in the East. England had not forgotten the danger to her dependency; ever since Buonaparte's expedition her fleet had blockaded Malta, the island fortress whose possession gave France a first stepping-stone in any enterprise against it; and the surrender of Malta left her unquestioned mistress of the Mediterranean. From Malta she now turned to Egypt itself. Triumphant as England had been at sea since the opening of the war, her soldiers had proved no match for the French on land. Two expeditions had been sent against Holland, and each had ended in a

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 Peace of
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disastrous retreat. But at this moment England re-appeared as a military power. In March, 1801, a force of 15,000 men under General Abercrombie anchored in Aboukir Bay. Deserted as they were by Buonaparte, the French had firmly maintained their hold on Egypt. They had suppressed a revolt at Cairo, driven back Turkish invaders in a fresh victory, and by native levies and reinforcements raised the number of their troops to 30,000 men. But their army was foolishly scattered, and Abercrombie was able to force a landing five days after his arrival on the coast. The French however rapidly concentrated; and on the 21st of March their general attacked the English army on the ground it had won with a force equal to its own. The battle was a stubborn one, and Abercrombie fell mortally wounded ere its close; but after six hours' fighting the French drew off with heavy loss; and their retreat was followed by the investment of Alexandria and Cairo, into which Menou had withdrawn his army. All hope however was over. Five thousand Turks, with a fresh division from England and India, reinforced the besiegers; and at the close of June the capitulation of the 13,000 soldiers who remained closed the French rule over Egypt.

Bitter as was the anger with which the First Consul received the news of this surrender, it only strengthened his resolve to suspend a war, of which Britain only could now reap the fruits, and whose continuance might in the present temper of Russia and its Czar disturb that peace of the Continent on which all his plans against England rested. It was to give time for such an organization of France and its resources as might enable him to reopen the struggle with other chances of success that the First Consul opened negotiations for peace at the close of 1801. His offers were at once met by the English Government. In the actual settlement of the Continent indeed England saw only an imperfect balance to the power of France, but it had no means of disputing the settlement, as France had

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no means of disturbing its supremacy at sea. If Buonaparte wished to husband his resources for a new attack all but the wilder Tories were willing to husband the resources of England for the more favourable opportunity of renewing it which would come with a revival of European energy. With such a temper on both sides the conclusion of peace became easy; and the negotiations which went on through the winter between England and the three allied Powers of France, Spain, and the Dutch, brought about in March, 1802, the Peace of Amiens. The terms of the Peace were necessarily simple; for as England had no claim to interfere with the settlement of the Continent, which had been brought about by the treaties of its powers with the French Republic, all that remained for her was to provide that the settlement should be a substantial one by a pledge on the part of France to withdraw its forces from Southern Italy, and to leave to themselves the republics it had set up along its border in Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont. In exchange for this pledge England recognized the French government, restored all the colonies which they had lost, save Ceylon and Trinidad, to France and its allies, acknowledged the Ionian Islands as a free republic and engaged to restore Malta within three months to its old masters, the Knights of St. John.

Buonaparte. There was a general sense of relief at the close of so long a struggle; and for a moment the bitter hatred which England had cherished against France seemed to give place to more friendly feelings. The new French ambassador was drawn in triumph on his arrival through the streets of London; and thousands of Englishmen crossed the Channel to visit a country which had conquered the world, and to gaze on the young general who after wonderful victories had given a yet more wonderful peace to Europe. But amidst all the glare of success, shrewd observers saw the dangers that lay in the temper of the First Consul. Whatever had been the errors of the French Revolutionists, even their worst attacks on

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the independence of the nations around them had been veiled by a vague notion of freeing the peoples whom they invaded from the yoke of their rulers. But the aim of Buonaparte was simply that of a vulgar conqueror. He was resolute to be master of the Western world, and no notions of popular freedom or sense of national right interfered with his resolve. The means at his command for carrying out such a design were immense. The political life of the Revolution had been cut short by his military despotism, but the new social vigour which the Revolution had given to France through the abolition of privileges and the creation of a new middle class on the ruins of the clergy and the nobles still lived on; and while the dissensions which tore the country asunder were hushed by the policy of the First Consul, by his restoration of the Church as a religious power, his recall of the exiles, and the economy and wise administration that distinguished his rule, the centralized system of government that had been bequeathed by the Monarchy to the Revolution and by the Revolution to Buonaparte enabled him easily to seize this national vigour for the profit of his own despotism. On the other hand, the exhaustion of the brilliant hopes raised by the Revolution, the craving for public order, the military enthusiasm and the impulse of a new glory given by the wonderful victories France had won, made a Tyranny possible; and in the hands of Buonaparte this tyranny was supported by a secret police, by the suppression of the press and of all freedom of opinion, and above all by the iron will and immense ability of the First Consul himself.

Once chosen Consul for life, he felt himself secure at home, and turned restlessly to the work of outer aggression. The pledges given at Amiens were set aside. The republics established on the borders of France were brought into mere dependence on his will. Piedmont and Parma were actually annexed to France; and a French army occupied Switzerland. The temperate

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protests of the English Government were answered by demands for the expulsion of the French exiles who had been living in England ever since the Revolution, and for its surrender of Malta, which was retained till some security could be devised against a fresh seizure of the island by the French fleet. Meanwhile huge armaments were preparing in the French ports; and a new activity was seen in those of Spain. Not for a moment indeed had Buonaparte relinquished his design of attacking Britain. He had made peace because peace would serve his purpose, both in strengthening the tranquillity of the Continent, which was essential to his success in any campaign across the Channel, and in giving him time to replace by a new combination the maritime schemes which had broken down. Beaten as it had been, the Spanish fleet was still powerful; and a union with the French fleet which the First Consul was forming might still enable it to dispute the command of the sea. All that he wished for was time; and time was what the Peace gave him. But delay was as dangerous to England, now that it discerned his plans, as it was profitable to France; and in May, 1803, the British government anticipated his attack by a declaration of war.

*The
Camp at
Boulogne.*

The breach only quickened Buonaparte's resolve to attack his enemy at home. The difficulties in his way he set contemptuously aside; "Fifteen millions of people," he said, in allusion to the disproportion between the population of England and France, "must give way to forty millions;" and the invasion was planned on a gigantic scale. A camp of one hundred thousand men was formed at Boulogne, and a host of flat-bottomed boats gathered for their conveyance across the Channel. The peril of the nation forced Addington from office and-recalled Pitt to power. His health was broken, and as the days went by his appearance became so haggard and depressed that it was plain death was drawing near. But dying as he really was, the nation clung to him with all its old faith. He was still the

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representative of national union; and he proposed to include Fox and the leading Whigs in his new ministry, but he was foiled by the bigotry of the King; and the refusal of Lord Grenville and of Wyndham to take office without Fox, as well as the loss of his post at a later time by his ablest supporter, Dundas, left him almost alone. But lonely as he was, he faced difficulty and danger with the same courage as of old. The invasion seemed imminent when Buonaparte, who now assumed the title of the Emperor Napoleon, appeared in the camp at Boulogne. A slight experience however showed him the futility of his scheme for crossing the Channel in open boats in the teeth of English men-of-war; and he turned to fresh plans of securing its passage. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours," he is reported to have said, "and we are masters of the world." A skilfully combined plan, by which the British fleet would have been divided while the whole French navy was concentrated in the Channel, was delayed by the death of the admiral destined to execute it. But the alliance with Spain placed the Spanish fleet at Napoleon's disposal, and in 1805 he planned its union with that of France, the crushing of the squadron which blocked the ports of the Channel before the English ships which were watching the Spanish armament could come to its support, and a crossing of the vast armament thus protected to the English shore.

Though three hundred thousand volunteers mustered in *Trafalgar.* England to meet the coming attack, such a force would have offered but small hindrance to the veterans of the Grand Army, had they once crossed the Channel. But Pitt had already found them work elsewhere. It was not merely the danger of Britain, and the sense that without this counterpoise they would be helpless before the new French Empire that roused the alarm of the Continental powers. They had been scared by Napoleon's course of aggression since the settlement at Luneville, and his annexation of Genoa brought their alarm to a head. Pitt's offer of subsidies

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removed the last obstacle in the way of a league; and Russia, Austria, and Sweden joined in an alliance to wrest Italy and the Low Countries from the grasp of the French Emperor. Napoleon meanwhile swept the sea in vain for a glimpse of the great armament whose assembly in the Channel he had so skilfully planned. Admiral Villeneuve, uniting the Spanish ships with his own squadron from Toulon, drew Nelson in pursuit to the West Indies, and then suddenly returning to Cadiz, hastened to form a junction with the French squadron at Brest and to crush the English fleet in the Channel. But a headlong pursuit brought Nelson up with him ere the manœuvre was complete, and the two fleets met on the 21st of October, 1805, off Cape Trafalgar. "England" ran Nelson's famous signal, "expects every man to do his duty;" and though he fell himself in the hour of victory, twenty French sail had struck their flag ere the day was done. The French and Spanish navies were in fact annihilated. From this hour the supremacy of England at sea remained unquestioned; and the danger of any invasion of England rolled away like a dream.

*The Peace
of Tilsit.*

Her allies were less fortunate. "England has saved herself by her courage," Pitt said in what were destined to be his last public words: "she will save Europe by her example!" But even before the victory of Trafalgar Napoleon had abandoned the dream of invading England to meet the coalition in his rear; and swinging round his forces on the Danube, he forced an Austrian army to capitulation in Ulm three days before his naval defeat. From Ulm he marched on Vienna, and at the close of November he crushed the combined armies of Austria and Russia in the battle of Austerlitz. "Austerlitz," Wilberforce wrote in his diary, "killed Pitt." Though he was still but forty-seven, the hollow voice and wasted frame of the great Minister had long told that death was near; and the blow to his hopes proved fatal. "Roll up that map," he said, pointing to a map of Europe which

hung upon the wall; "it will not be wanted these ten years!" Once only he rallied from stupor; and those who bent over him caught a faint murmur of "My country! How I leave my country!" On the twenty-third of January, 1806, he breathed his last; and was laid in Westminster Abbey in the grave of Chatham. "What grave," exclaimed Lord Wellesley, "contains such a father and such a son! What sepulchre embosoms the remains of so much human excellence and glory!" So great was felt to be the loss that nothing but the union of parties, which Pitt had in vain desired during his lifetime, could fill up the gap left by his death. In the new ministry Fox, with the small body of popular Whigs who were bent on peace and internal reform, united with the aristocratic Whigs under Lord Grenville and with the Tories under Lord Sidmouth. All home questions, in fact, were subordinated to the need of saving Europe from the ambition of France, and in the resolve to save Europe Fox was as resolute as Pitt himself. His hopes of peace indeed were stronger; but they were foiled by the evasive answer which Napoleon gave to his overtures, and by a new war which he undertook against Prussia, the one power which seemed able to resist his arms. On the 14th of October, 1806, a decisive victory at Jena laid North Germany at the Emperor's feet. From Berlin Napoleon marched into the heart of Poland to bring to terms the last opponent now left him on the Continent; and though checked in the winter by the stubborn defence of the Russian forces on the field of Eylau, in the summer of 1807 a decisive victory at Friedland brought the Czar to consent to the Peace of Tilsit.

The Peace of Tilsit marked an overthrow for the time of that European settlement and balance of power which had been established five years before by the Peace of Luneville. The change in his policy had been to a great extent forced on Napoleon; for the league of 1805 had shown that his plan of such a Continental peace as would suffer

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*The
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System.*

CHAP. V. him to concentrate his whole strength on an invasion of
 England and Napoleon. Britain was certain to be foiled by the fears of the Con-
 1801-1815. tinental states; and that an unquestioned supremacy over
 Europe was a first condition in the struggle with his great
 rival. Even with such a supremacy, indeed, his plans for a
 descent on Britain itself, or for winning the command of the
 sea which was the necessary preliminary to such a descent,
 still remained impracticable. The battle of Trafalgar had
 settled the question of an invasion of England; and a
 thousand victories on land would not make him master,
 even for "six hours," of the "silver streak" of sea that
 barred his path. But Napoleon was far from abandoning
 his struggle against Britain; on the contrary, he saw in
 his mastery of Europe the means of giving fresh force
 and effectiveness to his attack in a quarter where his foe
 was still vulnerable. It was her wealth that had raised
 up that European coalition against him which had forced
 him to break up his camp at Boulogne; and in his
 mastery of Europe he saw the means of striking at her
 wealth. His earlier attempt at the enforcement of a
 "Continental System" had broken down with the fail-
 ure of the Northern League; but he now saw a yet
 more effective means of realizing his dream. It was
 this gigantic project which revealed itself as soon as Jena
 had laid Prussia at his feet. Napoleon was able to
 find a pretext for his new attack in England's own action.
 By a violent stretch of her rights as a combatant she had
 declared the whole coast occupied by France and its allies,
 from Dantzic to Trieste, to be in a state of blockade. It
 was impossible to enforce such an order as this, even with
 the immense force at her disposal; but it was ostensibly to
 meet this "paper blockade" that Napoleon issued from
 Berlin on the twenty-first of November, 1806, a decree
 which—without a single ship to carry it out—placed the
 British Islands in a state of blockade. All commerce or
 communication with them was prohibited; all English
 goods or manufactures found in the territory of France or

CHAP. V. its allies were declared liable to confiscation; and their
 England and Napoleon. harbours were closed, not only against vessels coming
 1801-1815. from Britain, but against all who had touched at her ports.
 An army of inspectors spread along the coasts to carry
 out this decree.

But it was almost impossible to enforce such a system.
 It was foiled by the rise of a widespread contraband
 trade, by the reluctance of Holland to aid in its own ruin,
 by the connivance of officials along the Prussian and
 Russian shores, and by the pressure of facts. It was
 impossible even for Napoleon himself to do without the
 goods he pretended to exclude; an immense system of
 licences soon neutralized his decree; and the French
 army which marched to Eylau was clad in great-coats made
 at Leeds, and shod with shoes made at Northampton.
 Vexatious therefore as the system might be at once
 to England and to Europe, it told on British industry
 mainly by heightening the price of its products, and so far
 by restricting the market for them. But it told far more
 fatally on British commerce. Trade at once began to
 move from English vessels, which were subject to instant
 confiscation, and to shelter itself under neutral flags, where
 goods had at least to be proved to be British before they
 could be seized. America profited most by this transfer.
 She was now entering on that commercial career which
 was to make her England's chief trading rival; and she
 rapidly availed herself of the Berlin decree to widen her
 carrying trade. But the British Government at once felt
 the pressure of the merchant class. As yet this class had
 profited above all others by the war and by the monopoly
 which war placed in its hands; and now that not only its
 monopoly but its very existence was threatened, it called
 on the Government to protect it. It was to this appeal
 that the administration of Lord Grenville replied in
 January, 1807, by an Order in Council which declared all
 the ports of the coast of France and her allies under

Its results.

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Full of
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blockade, and any neutral vessels trading between them to be good prize.

Such a step however, though it arbitrarily shut neutral vessels out from the coasting trade of most of Europe, was far from satisfying the British merchants, for it left the whole trade between Europe and other countries, which virtually included the colonial trade, untouched; and this passed as of old into American bottoms. But their appeal was no longer to Lord Grenville. The work which his ministry had set itself to do was to continue the double work of Pitt, his resolute maintenance of English greatness, and his endeavour to carry on even amidst the stress of the fight that course of philanthropic and political progress which was struggling back into renewed vigour after its long arrest through the French Revolution. But the forces of ignorance and bigotry which had been too strong for Pitt were too strong for the Grenville ministry, weakened as it was by the death of Fox at the close of the previous year. Its greatest work, the abolition of the slave trade, in February 1807, was done in the teeth of a vigorous opposition from the Tories and the merchants of Liverpool; and in March the first indication of its desire to open the question of religious equality by allowing Catholic officers to serve in the army was met on the part of the King by the demand of a pledge not to meddle with the question. On the refusal of this pledge the Ministry was dismissed. Its fall was the final close of that union of parties in face of the war with France which had brought about the junction of the bulk of the Whig party with the Tories, and which had been to some extent renewed after the temporary breach in Pitt's last ministry by the junction of Lord Sidmouth and a large body of the Tories with the Whigs. The union had been based on the actual peril to England's existence, and on the suspension of all home questions in face of the peril. But with the break-up of the camp at Boulogne and the victory of Trafalgar the peril of invasion had

disappeared. England again broke into the party that called for progress and the party that resisted it.

The last was still the stronger: for in the mass of the nation progress was still confounded with the destruction of institutions, the passion for war absorbed public attention, and the Tories showed themselves most in earnest in the prosecution of the war. From this time therefore to the end of the war England was wholly governed by the Tories. The nominal head of the ministry which succeeded that of Lord Grenville was the Duke of Portland; its guiding spirit was the Foreign Secretary, George Canning, a young and devoted adherent of Pitt, whose brilliant rhetoric gave him power over the House of Commons, while the vigour and breadth of his mind gave a new energy and colour to the war. At no time had opposition to Napoleon seemed so hopeless as at the moment of his entry into power. From foes the two Emperors of Western and Eastern Europe had become friends, and the hope of French aid in the conquest of Turkey drew Alexander to a close alliance with Napoleon. Russia not only enforced the Berlin decrees against British commerce, but forced Sweden, the one ally that England still retained on the Continent, to renounce her alliance. The Russian and Swedish fleets were thus placed at the service of France; and the two Emperors counted on securing in addition the fleet of Denmark, and again threatening by this union the maritime supremacy which formed England's real defence. The hope was foiled by the decision of the new ministers. In July, 1807, an expedition was promptly and secretly equipped by Canning, with a demand for the surrender of the Danish fleet into the hands of England, on pledge of its return at the close of the war. On the refusal of the Danes the demand was enforced by a bombardment of Copenhagen; and the whole Danish fleet, with a vast mass of naval stores, was carried into British ports. It was in the same spirit of almost reckless decision

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CHAP. V. that Canning turned to meet Napoleon's Continental
England and Napoleon. System. The cry of the British merchant fell upon willing
1801-1815. ears. Of trade or the laws of trade Canning was utterly ignorant; nor could he see that the interests of the country were not necessarily the interests of a class; but he was resolute at any cost to hinder the transfer of commerce to neutral flags; and he saw in the crisis a means of forcing the one great neutral power, America, to join Britain in her strife with France. In November, 1807, therefore he issued fresh Orders in Council. By these France, and every Continental state from which the British flag was excluded, was put in a state of blockade, and all vessels bound for their harbours were held subject to seizure unless they had touched at a British port. The orders were at once met by another decree of Napoleon issued at Milan in December, which declared every vessel, of whatever nation, coming from or bound to Britain or any British colony, to have forfeited its character as a neutral, and to be liable to seizure.

*The
American
Embargo.*

The policy of Napoleon was at any rate a consistent one in these measures; for his sole aim was to annihilate the industry as well as the commerce of Britain; and he had little to fear from the indignation of America. But the aim of Britain was to find outlets for her manufactures; and of these outlets America was now far the most important. She took in fact ten millions of our exports every year, not only for her own consumption, but for the illicit trade which she managed to carry on with the Continent. To close such an outlet as this was to play into Napoleon's hands. And yet the first result of Canning's policy was to close it. In the long strife between France and England, America had already borne much from both combatants, but above all from Britain. Not only had the English Government exercised its right of search, but it asserted a right of seizing English seamen found in American vessels; and as there were few means of discriminating between English seamen and American, the

sailor of Maine or Massachusetts was often impressed to serve in the British fleet. Galled however as was America by outrages such as these, she was hindered from resenting them by her strong disinclination to war, as well as by the profit which she drew from the maintenance of her neutral position; and she believed in the words of Jefferson, that "it will ever be in our power to keep so even a stand between France and England, as to inspire a wish in neither to throw us into the scale of his adversary." But the Orders in Council and the Milan Decree forced her into action, and she at once answered them by an embargo of trade with Europe.

Such a step was a menace of further action, for it was plain that America could not long remain in utter isolation, and that if she left it she must join one combatant or the other. But she had as yet shown no military power outside her own bounds, either by land or sea; and England looked with scorn on the threats of a state which possessed neither army nor fleet. "America," Lord Sidmouth wrote at this time, "is a bugbear: there is no terror in her threats!" Canning indeed saw in the embargo only a carrying out of his policy by the very machinery of the American Government. The commerce of America ceased to exist. Her seamen were driven to seek employment under the British flag; and Britain again absorbed the carrying-trade of the world. But what he really looked forward to was something far beyond this. He saw that the embargo was but a temporary expedient: and he believed that its failure would force the United States into union with England in her war with France. Nothing shows the world-wide nature of the struggle more than such a policy as this; but for a while it seemed justified by its results. After a year's trial America found it impossible to maintain the embargo: and at the opening of 1809 she exchanged it for an Act of Non-intercourse with France and England alone. But this Act was as ineffective as the embargo. The American Government was utterly without means of

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enforcing it on its land frontier; and it had small means of enforcing it at sea. Throughout 1809 indeed vessels sailed daily for British ports. The Act was thus effective against France alone, and part of Canning's end was gained. At last the very protest which it embodied was given up, and in May, 1810, the Non-Intercourse Act was repealed altogether. All that America persisted in maintaining was an offer that if either Power would repeal its edicts, it would prohibit American commerce with the other.

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What the results of this offer were to be, we shall see hereafter. But at the moment the attitude of America was one of utter submission; and the effect of the Continental system on Britain had thus been to drive it to a policy of aggression upon neutral states, which seemed to be as successful as it was aggressive. The effect of his system on Napoleon himself was precisely the same. It was to maintain this material union of Europe against Britain that he was driven to aggression after aggression in North Germany, and to demands upon Russia which threatened the league that had been formed at Tilsit. Above all, it was the hope of more effectually crushing the world-power of Britain that drove him, at the very moment when Canning was attacking America, to his worst aggression, the aggression upon Spain. Spain was already his subservient ally; but her alliance became every hour less useful. The country was ruined by misgovernment: its treasury was empty: its fleet rotted in its harbours. To seize the whole Spanish Peninsula, to develop its resources by an active administration, to have at his command not only a regenerated Spain and Portugal, but their mighty dominions in Southern and Central America, to renew with these fresh forces the struggle with Britain for her empire of the seas, these were the designs by which Napoleon was driven to the most ruthless of his enterprizes. He acted with his usual subtlety. In October, 1807, France and Spain agreed to divide Portugal between them; and on the

advance of their forces the reigning House of Braganza fled helplessly from Lisbon to a refuge in Brazil. But the seizure of Portugal was only a prelude to the seizure of Spain. Charles the Fourth, whom a riot in his capital drove at this moment to abdication, and his son and successor, Ferdinand the Seventh, were alike drawn to Bayonne in May, 1808, and forced to resign their claims to the Spanish crown; while a French army entered Madrid, and proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte as King of Spain.

High-handed as such an act was, it was in harmony with the general system which Napoleon was pursuing elsewhere, and which had as yet stirred no national resistance. Holland had been changed into a monarchy by a simple decree of the French Emperor, and its crown bestowed on his brother Louis. For another brother, Jerome, a kingdom of Westphalia had been built up out of the Electorates of Hesse Cassel and Hanover. Joseph himself had been set as king over Naples before his transfer to Spain. But the spell of submission was now suddenly broken, and the new king had hardly entered Madrid when Spain rose as one man against the stranger. Desperate as the effort of its people seemed, the news of the rising was welcomed throughout England with a burst of enthusiastic joy. "Hitherto," cried Sheridan, a leader of the Whig opposition, "Buonaparte has contended with princes without dignity, numbers without ardour, or peoples without patriotism. He has yet to learn what it is to combat a people who are animated by one spirit against him." Tory and Whig alike held that "never had so happy an opportunity existed for Britain to strike a bold stroke for the rescue of the world;" and Canning at once resolved to change the system of desultory descents on colonies and sugar islands for a vigorous warfare in the Peninsula. Supplies were sent to the Spanish insurgents with reckless profusion, and two small armies placed under the command of Sir John Moore and Sir Arthur Wellesley for service in the Peninsula.

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In July 1808 the surrender at Baylen of a French force which had invaded Andalusia gave the first shock to the power of Napoleon, and the blow was followed by one almost as severe. Landing at the Mondego with fifteen thousand men, Sir Arthur Wellesley drove the French army of Portugal from the field of Vimiera, and forced it to surrender in the Convention of Cintra on the 30th of August. But the tide of success was soon roughly turned. Napoleon appeared in Spain with an army of two hundred thousand men; and Moore, who had advanced from Lisbon to Salamanca to support the Spanish armies, found them crushed on the Ebro, and was driven to fall hastily back on the coast. His force saved its honour in a battle before Corunna on the 16th of January, 1809, which enabled it to embark in safety; but elsewhere all seemed lost. The whole of northern and central Spain was held by the French armies; and even Zaragoza, which had once heroically repulsed them, submitted after a second equally desperate resistance.

Wellesley
in
Portugal.

The landing of the wreck of Moore's army and the news of the Spanish defeats turned the temper of England from the wildest hope to the deepest despair; but Canning remained unmoved. On the day of the evacuation of Corunna he signed a treaty of alliance with the Junta which governed Spain in the absence of its King; and the English force at Lisbon, which had already prepared to leave Portugal, was reinforced with thirteen thousand fresh troops and placed under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. "Portugal," Wellesley wrote coolly, "may be defended against any force which the French can bring against it." At this critical moment the best of the French troops with the Emperor himself were drawn from the Peninsula to the Danube; for the Spanish rising had roused Austria as well as England to a renewal of the struggle. When Marshal Soult therefore threatened Lisbon from the north, Wellesley marched boldly against him, drove him from Oporto in a disastrous retreat, and

suddenly changing his line of operations, pushed with twenty thousand men by Abrantes on Madrid. He was joined on the march by a Spanish force of thirty thousand men; and a bloody action with a French army of equal force at Talavera in July, 1809, restored the renown of English arms. The losses on both sides were enormous, and the French fell back at the close of the struggle; but the fruits of the victory were lost by a sudden appearance of Soult on the English line of advance. Wellesley was forced to retreat hastily on Badajoz, and his failure was embittered by heavier disasters elsewhere; for Austria was driven to sue for peace by a decisive victory of Napoleon at Wagram, while a force of forty thousand English soldiers which had been despatched against Antwerp in July returned home baffled after losing half its numbers in the marshes of Walcheren.

The failure at Walcheren brought about the fall of the Portland ministry. Canning attributed this disaster to the incompetence of Lord Castlereagh, an Irish peer who after taking the chief part in bringing about the union between England and Ireland had been raised by the Duke of Portland to the post of Secretary at War; and the quarrel between the two Ministers ended in a duel and in their resignation of their offices in September, 1809. The Duke of Portland retired with Canning; and a new ministry was formed out of the more Tory members of the late administration under the guidance of Spencer Perceval, an industrious mediocrity of the narrowest type; while the Marquis of Wellesley, a brother of the English general in Spain, succeeded Canning as Foreign Secretary. But if Perceval and his colleagues possessed few of the higher qualities of statesmanship, they had one characteristic which in the actual position of English affairs was beyond all price. They were resolute to continue the war. In the nation at large the fit of enthusiasm had been followed by a fit of despair; and the City of London even petitioned for a withdrawal of the English forces from the Peninsula.

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CHAP. V. Napoleon seemed irresistible, and now that Austria was crushed and England stood alone in opposition to him, the Emperor determined to put an end to the strife by a vigorous prosecution of the war in Spain. Andalusia, the one province which remained independent, was invaded in the opening of 1810, and with the exception of Cadiz reduced to submission; while Marshal Massena with a fine army of eighty thousand men marched upon Lisbon. Even Perceval abandoned all hope of preserving a hold on the Peninsula in face of these new efforts, and threw on Wellesley, who had been raised to the peerage as Lord Wellington after Talavera, the responsibility of resolving to remain there.

*Torres
Vedras.*

But the cool judgement and firm temper which distinguished Wellington enabled him to face a responsibility from which weaker men would have shrunk. "I conceive," he answered, "that the honour and interest of our country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can." By the addition of Portuguese troops who had been trained under British officers, his army was now raised to fifty thousand men; and though his inferiority in force compelled him to look on while Massena reduced the frontier fortresses of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida, he inflicted on him a heavy check at the heights of Busaco, and finally fell back in October, 1810, on three lines of defence which he had secretly constructed at Torres Vedras, along a chain of mountain heights crowned with redoubts and bristling with cannon. The position was impregnable: and able and stubborn as Massena was he found himself forced after a month's fruitless efforts to fall back in a masterly retreat; but so terrible were the privations of the French army in passing again through the wasted country that it was only with forty thousand men that he reached Ciudad Rodrigo in the spring of 1811. Reinforced by fresh troops, Massena turned fiercely to the relief of Almeida, which Wellington had besieged. Two

days' bloody and obstinate fighting however in May, 1811, failed to drive the English army from its position at Fuentes d'Onore, and the Marshal fell back on Salamanca and relinquished his effort to drive Wellington from Portugal. But great as was the effect of Torres Vedras in restoring the spirit of the English people, and in reviving throughout Europe the hope of resistance to the tyranny of Napoleon, its immediate result was little save the deliverance of Portugal. If Massena had failed, his colleagues had succeeded in their enterprizes; the French were now masters of all Spain save Cadiz and the eastern provinces, and even the east coast was reduced in 1811 by the vigour of General Suchet.

While England thus failed to rescue Spain from the aggression of Napoleon, she was suddenly brought face to face with the result of her own aggression in America. The repeal of the Non-Intercourse Act in 1810 had in effect been a triumph for Britain: but the triumph forced Napoleon's hand. As yet all he had done by his attack on neutral rights had been to drive the United States practically to join England against him. To revenge himself by war with them would only play England's game yet more; and with characteristic rapidity Napoleon passed from hostility to friendship. He seized on the offer with which America had closed her efforts against the two combatants, and after promising to revoke his Berlin and Milan Decrees he called on America to redeem her pledge. In February, 1811, therefore the United States announced that all intercourse with Great Britain and her dependencies was at an end. The effect of this step was seen in a reduction of English exports during this year by a third of their whole amount. It was in vain that Britain pleaded that the Emperor's promises remained unfulfilled, that neither of the decrees was withdrawn, that Napoleon had failed to return the American merchandize seized under them, and that the enforcement of non-intercourse with England was thus an unjust act, and an act of

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CHAP. V. hostility. The pressure of the American policy, as well
 England and Napoleon. up in the United States, made submission inevitable; for
 1801-1815. the industrial state of England was now so critical that
 to expose it to fresh shocks was to court the very ruin
 which Napoleon had planned.

State of
 England.

During the earlier years of the war indeed the increase of wealth had been enormous. England was sole mistress of the seas. The war gave her possession of the colonies of Spain, of Holland, and of France; and if her trade was checked for a time by the Berlin Decree, the efforts of Napoleon were soon rendered fruitless by the smuggling system which sprang up along the southern coasts and the coast of North Germany. English exports indeed had nearly doubled since the opening of the century. Manufactures were profiting by the discoveries of Watt and Arkwright; and the consumption of raw cotton in the mills of Lancashire rose during the same period from fifty to a hundred millions of pounds. The vast accumulation of capital, as well as the vast increase of the population at this time, told upon the land, and forced agriculture into a feverish and unhealthy prosperity. Wheat rose to famine prices, and the value of land rose in proportion with the price of wheat. Inclosures went on with prodigious rapidity; the income of every landowner was doubled, while the farmers were able to introduce improvements into the processes of agriculture which changed the whole face of the country. But if the increase of wealth was enormous, its distribution was partial. During the fifteen years which preceded Waterloo, the number of the population rose from ten to thirteen millions, and this rapid increase kept down the rate of wages, which would naturally have advanced in a corresponding degree with the increase in the national wealth. Even manufactures, though destined in the long run to benefit the labouring classes, seemed at first rather to depress them; for one of the earliest results of the introduction of machinery was the ruin of a

number of small trades which were carried on at home and the pauperization of families who relied on them for support. In the winter of 1811 the terrible pressure of this transition from handicraft to machinery was seen in the Luddite, or machine-breaking, riots which broke out over the northern and midland counties; and which were only suppressed by military force. While labour was thus thrown out of its older grooves, and the rate of wages kept down at an artificially low figure by the rapid increase of population, the rise in the price of wheat, which brought wealth to the landowner and the farmer, brought famine and death to the poor, for England was cut off by the war from the vast corn-fields of the Continent or of America, which nowadays redress from their abundance the results of a bad harvest. Scarcity was followed by a terrible pauperization of the labouring classes. The amount of the poor-rate rose fifty per cent.; and with the increase of poverty followed its inevitable result, the increase of crime.

The natural relation of trade and commerce to the general wealth of the people at large was thus disturbed by the peculiar circumstances of the time. The war enriched the landowner, the farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer; but it impoverished the poor. It is indeed from these fatal years that we must date that war of classes, that social severance between employers and employed, which still forms the main difficulty of English politics. But it is from these too that we must date the renewal of that progressive movement in politics which had been suspended since the opening of the war. The publication of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 by a knot of young lawyers at Edinburgh marked a revival of the policy of constitutional and administrative progress which had been reluctantly abandoned by William Pitt. Jeremy Bentham gave a new vigour to political speculation by his advocacy of the doctrine of Utility, and his definition of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" as the aim of

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Political
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CHAP. V. political action. In 1809 Sir Francis Burdett revived the question of Parliamentary Reform. Only fifteen members supported his motion; and a reference to the House of Commons in a pamphlet which he subsequently published, as "a part of our fellow-subjects collected together by means which it is not necessary to describe" was met by his committal to the Tower, where he remained till the prorogation of the Parliament. A far greater effect was produced by the perseverance with which Canning pressed year by year the question of Catholic Emancipation. So long as Perceval lived both efforts at Reform were equally vain; but the advancing strength of a more liberal sentiment in the nation was felt by the policy of "moderate concession" which was adopted by his successors. Catholic Emancipation became an open question in the Cabinet itself, and was adopted in 1812 by a triumphant majority in the House of Commons, though it was still rejected by the Lords.

War with
America.

With social and political troubles thus awaking anew to life about them, even Tory statesmen were not willing to face the terrible consequences of a ruin of English industry such as might follow from the junction of America with Napoleon. They were in fact preparing to withdraw the Orders in Council, when their plans were arrested by the dissolution of the Perceval ministry. Its position had from the first been a weak one. A return of the King's madness made it necessary in the beginning of 1811 to confer the Regency on the Prince of Wales; and the Whig sympathies of the Prince threatened for a while the Cabinet with dismissal. Though this difficulty was surmounted their hold of power remained insecure, and the insecurity of the ministry told on the conduct of the war; for the apparent inactivity of Wellington during 1811 was really due to the hesitation and timidity of the Cabinet at home. But in May, 1812, the assassination of Perceval by a madman named Bellingham brought about the dissolution of his ministry; and fresh efforts were made by the Regent to install the Whigs in office. Mutual distrust

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however again foiled his attempts; and the old ministry returned to office under the headship of Lord Liverpool, a man of no great abilities, but temperate, well-informed, and endowed with a remarkable skill in holding discordant colleagues together. The most important of these colleagues was Lord Castlereagh, who became Secretary for Foreign affairs. Time has long ago rendered justice to the political ability of Castlereagh, disguised as it was to men of his own day by a curious infelicity of expression; and the instinctive good sense of Englishmen never showed itself more remarkably than in their preference at this crisis of his cool judgement, his high courage, his discernment, and his will to the more showy brilliancy of Canning. His first work indeed as a minister was to meet the danger in which Canning had involved the country by his Orders in Council. On the 23rd of June, only twelve days after the ministry had been formed, these Orders were repealed. But quick as was Castlereagh's action, events had moved even more quickly. At the opening of the year America, in despair of redress, had resolved on war; Congress had voted an increase of both army and navy; and laid in April an embargo on all vessels in American harbours. Actual hostilities might still have been averted by the repeal of the Orders, on which the English Cabinet was resolved; but in the confusion which followed the murder of Perceval, and the strife of parties for office through the month that followed, the opportunity was lost. When the news of the repeal reached America, it came six weeks too late. On the 18th of June an Act of Congress had declared America at war with Great Britain.

Had Napoleon been able to reap the fruits of the strife which his policy had thus forced on the two English peoples, it is hard to say how Britain could have coped with him. Cut off from her markets alike in east and west, her industries checked and disorganized, a financial crisis added to her social embarrassment, it may be doubted whether she must not have bowed in the end before

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CHAP. V. the pressure of the Continental System. But if that system had thrust her into aggression and ruin, it was as inevitably thrusting the same aggression and ruin on her rival. The moment when America entered into the great struggle was a critical moment in the history of mankind. Six days after President Madison issued his declaration of war, Napoleon crossed the Niemen on his march to Moscow. Successful as his policy had been in stirring up war between England and America, it had been no less successful in breaking the alliance which he had made with the Czar at Tilsit and in forcing on a contest with Russia. On the one hand, Napoleon was irritated by the refusal of Russia to enforce strictly the suspension of all trade with England, though such a suspension would have ruined the Russian landowners. On the other, Alexander saw with growing anxiety the advance of the French Empire which sprang from Napoleon's resolve to enforce his system by a seizure of the northern coasts. In 1811 Holland, the Hanseatic towns, part of Westphalia, and the Duchy of Oldenburg were successively annexed, and the Duchy of Mecklenburg threatened with seizure. A peremptory demand on the part of France for the entire cessation of intercourse with England brought the quarrel to a head; and preparations were made on both sides for a gigantic struggle.

Salamanca. Even before it opened, this new enterprize gave fresh vigour to Napoleon's foes. The best of the French soldiers were drawn from Spain to the frontier of Poland; and Wellington, whose army had been raised to a force of forty thousand Englishmen and twenty thousand Portuguese, profited by the withdrawal to throw off his system of defence and to assume an attitude of attack. Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were taken by storm during the spring of 1812; and at the close of June, three days before Napoleon crossed the Niemen, in his march on Moscow, Wellington crossed the Agueda in a march on Salamanca. After a series of masterly movements on both

sides, Marmont with the French army of the North attacked the English on the hills in the neighbourhood of that town on the twenty-second of July. While he was marching round the right of the English position his left wing remained isolated; and with a sudden exclamation of "Marmont is lost!" Wellington flung on it the bulk of his force, crushed it, and drove the whole army from the field. The loss on either side was nearly equal, but failure had demoralized the French army; and its retreat forced Joseph to leave Madrid, and Soult to evacuate Andalusia and to concentrate the southern army on the eastern coast. While Napoleon was still pushing slowly over the vast plains of Poland, Wellington made his entry into Madrid in August, and began the siege of Burgos. The town however held out gallantly for a month, till the advance of the two French armies, now concentrated in the north and south of Spain, forced Wellington, in October, to a hasty retreat on the Portuguese frontier.

If Wellington had shaken the rule of the French in Spain in this campaign, his ultimate failure showed how firm a military hold they still possessed there. But the disappointment was forgotten in the news which followed it. At the moment when the English troops fell back from Burgos began the retreat of the Grand Army from Moscow. Victorious in a battle at Borodino, Napoleon had entered the older capital of Russia in triumph, and waited impatiently to receive proposals of peace from the Czar. But a fire kindled by its own inhabitants reduced the city to ashes; Alexander still remained silent; and the gathering cold bent even the stubborn will of Napoleon to own the need of retreat. The French were forced to fall back amidst the horrors of a Russian winter; and of the four hundred thousand combatants who formed the Grand Army at its first outset, only a few thousands recrossed the Niemen in December. In spite of the gigantic efforts which Napoleon made to repair his losses, the spell which he had cast over Europe was broken. Prussia rose against

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CHAP. V. him as the Russians crossed the Niemen in the spring of 1813; and the forces which held it were at once thrown back on the Elbe. In this emergency the military genius of the French Emperor rose to its height. With a fresh army of two hundred thousand men whom he had gathered at Mainz he marched on the allied armies of Russia and Prussia in May, cleared Saxony by a victory over them at Lutzen, and threw them back on the Oder by a fresh victory at Bautzen. Disheartened by defeat, and by the neutral attitude which Austria still preserved, the two powers consented in June to an armistice, and negotiated for peace. But Austria, though unwilling to utterly ruin France to the profit of her great rival in the East, was as resolute as either of the allies to wrest from Napoleon his supremacy over Europe; and at the moment when it became clear that Napoleon was only bent on playing with her proposals, she was stirred to action by news that his army was at last driven from Spain. Wellington had left Portugal in May with an army which had now risen to ninety thousand men; and overtaking the French forces in retreat at Vitoria on the twenty-first of June he inflicted on them a defeat which drove them in utter rout across the Pyrenees. Madrid was at once evacuated; and Clauzel fell back from Zaragoza into France. The victory not only freed Spain from its invaders; it restored the spirit of the Allies. The close of the armistice was followed by a union of Austria with the forces of Prussia and the Czar; and in October a final overthrow of Napoleon at Leipzig forced the French army to fall back in rout across the Rhine.

His Abdication. The war now hurried to its close. Though held at bay for a while by the sieges of San Sebastian and Pampeluna, as well as by an obstinate defence of the Pyrenees, Wellington succeeded in the very month of the triumph at Leipzig in winning a victory on the Bidassoa, which enabled him to enter France. He was soon followed by the Allies. On the last day of 1813 their forces crossed

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the Rhine; and a third of France passed, without opposition, into their hands. For two months more Napoleon maintained a wonderful struggle with a handful of raw conscripts against their overwhelming numbers; while in the south, Soult, forced from his entrenched camp near Bayonne and defeated at Orthes, fell back before Wellington on Toulouse. Here their two armies met in April in a stubborn and indecisive engagement. But though neither leader knew it, the war was even then at an end. The struggle of Napoleon himself had ended at the close of March with the surrender of Paris; and the submission of the capital was at once followed by the abdication of the Emperor and the return of the Bourbons.

England's triumph over its enemy was dashed by the more doubtful fortunes of the struggle across the Atlantic. The declaration of war by America seemed an act of sheer madness; for its navy consisted of a few frigates and sloops; its army was a mass of half-drilled and half-armed recruits; while the States themselves were divided on the question of the war, and Connecticut with Massachusetts refused to send either money or men. Three attempts to penetrate into Canada during the summer and autumn were repulsed with heavy loss. But these failures were more than redeemed by unexpected successes at sea, where in two successive engagements between English and American frigates, the former were forced to strike their flag. The effect of these victories was out of all proportion to their real importance; for they were the first heavy blows which had been dealt at England's supremacy over the seas. In 1813 America followed up its naval triumphs by more vigorous efforts on land. Its forces cleared Lake Ontario, captured Toronto, destroyed the British flotilla on Lake Erie, and made themselves masters of Upper Canada. An attack on Lower Canada, however, was successfully beaten back; and a fresh advance of the British and Canadian forces in the heart of the winter again recovered the Upper Province. The reverse gave fresh strength to the

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*The
American
War.*

CHAP. V. party in the United States which had throughout been
 England opposed to the war, and whose opposition to it had
 and been embittered by the terrible distress brought about
 Napoleon. by the blockade and the ruin of American commerce. Cries
 1801- of secession began to be heard, and Massachusetts took the
 1815. bold step of appointing delegates to confer with delegates
 from the other New England States "on the subject of
 their grievances and common concerns."

*Peace with
 America.*

In 1814, however, the war was renewed with more vigour than ever; and Upper Canada was again invaded. But the American army, after inflicting a severe defeat on the British forces in the battle of Chippewa in July, was itself defeated a few weeks after in an equally stubborn engagement, and thrown back on its own frontier; while the fall of Napoleon enabled the English Government to devote its whole strength to the struggle with an enemy which it had ceased to despise. General Ross, with a force of four thousand men, appeared in the Potomac, captured Washington, and before evacuating the city burnt its public buildings to the ground. Few more shameful acts are recorded in our history; and it was the more shameful in that it was done under strict orders from the Government at home. But the raid upon Washington, was intended simply to strike terror into the American people; and the real stress of the war was thrown on two expeditions whose business was to penetrate into the States from the north and from the south. Both proved utter failures. A force of nine thousand Peninsular veterans which marched in September to the attack of Plattsburg on Lake Champlain was forced to fall back by the defeat of the English flotilla which accompanied it. A second force under General Packenham appeared in December at the mouth of the Mississippi and attacked New Orleans, but was repulsed by General Jackson with the loss of half its numbers. Peace, however, had already been concluded. The close of the French war, if it left untouched the grounds of the struggle, made the United States sensible of the danger of

pushing it further; Britain herself was anxious for peace; and the warring claims, both of England and America, were set aside in silence in the treaty of 1814.

The close of the war with the United States freed England's hands at a moment when the reappearance of Napoleon at Paris called her to a new and final struggle with France. By treaty with the Allied Powers Napoleon had been suffered to retain a fragment of his former empire—the island of Elba off the coast of Tuscany; and from Elba he looked on at the quarrels which sprang up between his conquerors as soon as they gathered at Vienna to complete the settlement of Europe. The most formidable of these quarrels arose from a claim of Prussia to annex Saxony and that of Russia to annex Poland; but their union for this purpose was met by a counter-league of England and Austria with their old enemy, France, whose ambassador, Talleyrand, laboured vigorously to bring the question to an issue by force of arms. At the moment, however, when a war between the two leagues seemed close at hand, Napoleon landed on the coast near Cannes, and, followed only by a thousand of his guards, marched over the mountains of Dauphiné upon Grenoble and Lyons. He counted, and counted justly, on the indifference of the country to its new Bourbon rulers, on the longing of the army for a fresh struggle which should restore its glory, and above all in the spell of his name over soldiers whom he had so often led to victory. In twenty days from his landing he reached the Tuileries unopposed, while Lewis the Eighteenth fled helplessly to Ghent. But whatever hopes he had drawn from the divisions of the Allied Powers were at once dispelled by their resolute action on the news of his descent upon France. Their strife was hushed and their old union restored by the consciousness of a common danger. An engagement to supply a million of men for the purposes of the war, and a recall of their armies to the Rhine, answered Napoleon's efforts to open negotiations with the Powers.

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England furnished subsidies to the amount of eleven millions, and hastened to place an army on the frontier of the Netherlands. The best troops of the force which had been employed in the Peninsula however, were still across the Atlantic; and of the eighty thousand men who gathered round Wellington only about half were Englishmen, the rest mainly raw levies from Belgium and Hanover. The Duke's plan was to unite with the one hundred and fifty thousand Prussians under Marshal Blucher who were advancing on the Lower Rhine, and to enter France by Mons and Namur while the forces of Austria and Russia closed in upon Paris by way of Belfort and Elsass. But Napoleon had thrown aside all thought of a merely defensive warfare. By amazing efforts he had raised an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men in the few months since his arrival in Paris; and in the opening of June 1815 one hundred and twenty thousand Frenchmen were concentrated on the Sambre at Charleroi, while Wellington's troops still lay in cantonments on the line of the Scheldt from Ath to Nivelles, and Blucher's on that of the Meuse from Nivelles to Liège. Both the allied armies hastened to unite at Quatre Bras; but their junction there was already impossible. Blucher with eighty thousand men was himself attacked by Napoleon at Ligny, and after a desperate contest driven back with terrible loss upon Wavre. On the same day Ney with twenty thousand men, and an equal force under D'Erlon in reserve, appeared before Quatre Bras, where as yet only ten thousand English and the same force of Belgian troops had been able to assemble. The Belgians broke before the charges of the French horse; and only the dogged resistance of the English infantry gave time for Wellington to bring up corps after corps, till at the close of the day Ney saw himself heavily outnumbered, and withdrew baffled from the field.

Waterloo. About five thousand men had fallen on either side in this fierce engagement: but heavy as was Wellington's loss, the firmness of the English army had already done

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much to foil Napoleon's effort at breaking through the line of the Allies. Blucher's retreat however left the English flank uncovered; and on the following day, while the Prussians were falling back on Wavre, Wellington, with nearly seventy thousand men—for his army was now well in hand—withdrew in good order, followed by the mass of the French forces under the Emperor himself. Napoleon had detached thirty thousand men under Grouchy to hang upon the rear of the beaten Prussians, while with a force of eighty thousand he resolved to bring Wellington to battle. On the morning of the 18th of June the two armies faced one another on the field of Waterloo in front of the Forest of Soignies, on the high road to Brussels. Napoleon's one fear had been that of a continued retreat. "I have them!" he cried, as he saw the English line drawn up on a low rise of ground which stretched across the high road from the château of Hougomont on its right to the farm and straggling village of La Haye Sainte on its left. He had some grounds for his confidence of success. On either side the forces numbered between seventy and eighty thousand men: but the French were superior in guns and cavalry, and a large part of Wellington's force consisted of Belgian levies who broke and fled at the outset of the fight. A fierce attack upon Hougomont opened the battle at eleven; but it was not till midday that the corps of D'Erlon advanced upon the centre near La Haye Sainte, which from that time bore the main brunt of the struggle. Never has greater courage, whether of attack or endurance, been shown on any field than was shown by both combatants at Waterloo. The columns of D'Erlon, repulsed by the English foot, were hurled back in disorder by a charge of the Scots Greys; but the victorious horsemen were crushed in their turn by the French cuirassiers, and the mass of the French cavalry, twelve thousand strong, flung itself in charge after charge on the English front, carrying the English guns and sweeping with desperate bravery round the unbroken

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squares whose fire thinned their ranks. With almost equal bravery the French columns of the centre again advanced, wrested at last the farm of La Haye Sainte from their opponents, and pushed on vigorously though in vain under Ney against the troops in its rear.

But meanwhile every hour was telling against Napoleon. To win the battle he must crush the English army before Blucher joined it; and the English army was still uncrushed. Terrible as was his loss, and many of his regiments were reduced to a mere handful of men, Wellington stubbornly held his ground while the Prussians, advancing from Wavre through deep and miry forest roads, were slowly gathering to his support, disregarding the attack on their rear by which Grouchy strove to hold them back from the field. At half-past four their advanced guard deployed at last from the woods; but the main body was far behind, and Napoleon was still able to hold his ground against them till their increasing masses forced him to stake all on a desperate effort against the English front. The Imperial Guard—his only reserve, and which had as yet taken no part in the battle—was drawn up at seven in two huge columns of attack. The first, with Ney himself at its head, swept all before it as it mounted the rise beside La Haye Sainte, on which the thin English line still held its ground, and all but touched the English front when its mass, torn by the terrible fire of musketry with which it was received, gave way before a charge. The second, three thousand strong, advanced with the same courage over the slope near Hougomont, only to be repulsed and shattered in its turn. At the moment when these masses fell slowly and doggedly back down the fatal rise, the Prussians pushed forward on Napoleon's right, their guns swept the road to Charleroi, and Wellington seized the moment for a general advance. From that hour all was lost. Only the Guard stood firm in the wreck of the French army; and though darkness and exhaustion checked the English in their pursuit of the broken troops

as they hurried from the field, the Prussian horse continued the chase through the night. Only forty thousand Frenchmen with some thirty guns recrossed the Sambree while Napoleon himself fled hurriedly to Paris. His second abdication was followed by a triumphant entry of the English and Prussian armies into the French capital; and the long war ended with his exile to St. Helena, and the return of Louis the Eighteenth to the throne of the Bourbons.

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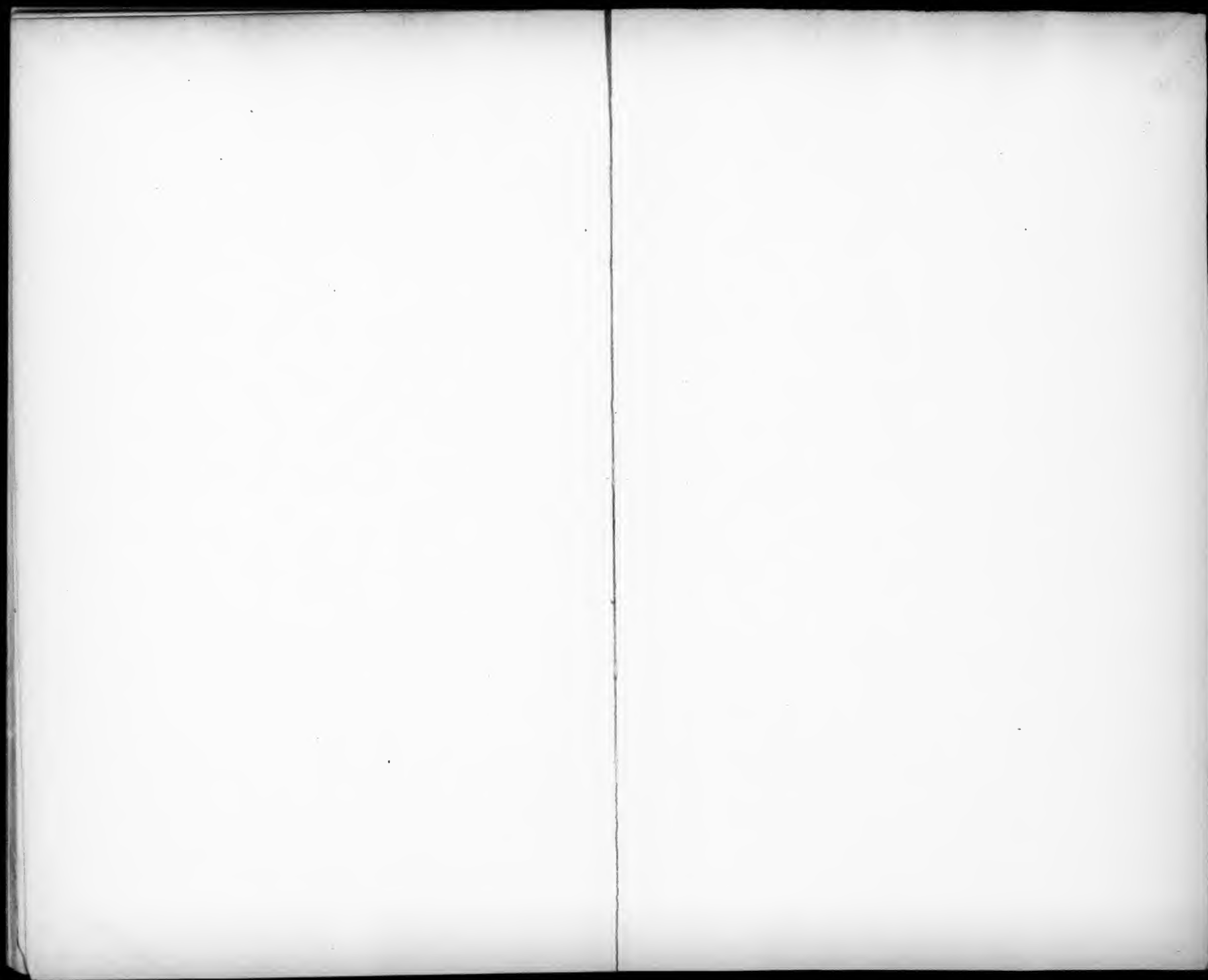
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